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Maria Lowell -
With the admiration of
Grace Greenwood



Grace Greenwood
1850—



POEMS

BY

GRACE GREENWOOD.

Mrs. Sara Jane (Clarke) Lippincott.

BOSTON:
TICKNOR, REED, AND FIELDS.

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1866, June 22.

Gift of
Prof. W. L. G. Loomis,
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DEDICATION.

TO MY MOTHER.

ON your heart, my beloved mother, I would lay this offering ; — because from the inflowing of your nature all poetry of mine has its source, so that these lays, whether embodying the light, sweet dreams of the girl, or the fervor and aspiration of the woman, are in spirit more yours than my own ; — because from you come my joy in the beautiful, and my faith in the good ; — because in your great love I have found the strength and repose and the fulness of life.

I say this in simple words, and few, — for the reason that heart-throbs can hardly be set to music, and that I could not well say more, were all my soul poured out in song.

GRACE.

PREFACE.

I HAVE but a word to offer in the way of a preface. I would only ask a generous public to regard this volume more as a promise than a performance, — more as a prophecy than a fulfilment. To the critic I would only whisper, that this collection is not nearly as large as it might have been; and that I am confident he would overlook the bad verse he may find in it, could he know how much worse poetry has been left out.

G. G.

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POEMS.

P R O E M.



SOME poet dreams come to the soul
In mystic beauty clad,
Unearthly in their loveliness,
So exquisitely sad.
Shadowy and dim and cloud-like things
Floating about on unseen wings,
They tremble on our sight ;
As in our nightly visions come
Pale spirits from their starry home,
To vanish with the light,
And by the waking heart forgot,
E'en as a rose remembers not,
In sunshine rich and warm,
The moonbeams that through night's long hours
Came still and cold, in silver showers,
Upon her slumbering form.

My dreams, my dreams,— would they might come
To all like voices from their home !
Like cool, bland breezes at mid-day,
Wafting sweet breathings on their way,
That tell us where the violet springs, —
Like birds with sunshine on their wings,
Like the glad laugh of morning rills,
Like the first day-beams o'er the hills,
Like the first stars when twilight closes,
Like the first blush of summer roses, —
Like all things pure, and bright, and gay,
That lure awhile the soul away
From care, and grief, and feverish strife,
And make the heart in love with life !

Some lays there are seem only sent
To add to passion's blandishment,
Or wing the creeping hours
Of souls to lifeless ease resigned,
In dreamy languidness reclined
On pleasure's couch of flowers.
And some are like exotics rare,
Found blooming in the still, soft air
Of pride and luxury only ;
And some like priceless, burning gems,
Set in imperial diadems,

In very brightness lonely ;
 And some in stately sluggishness,
 Forsaken barks, float rudderless
 Adown time's silent river ;
 And some are meteors on high,
 One moment flashing o'er the sky,
 Then lost in night for ever !

My lays, my lays, — would they might find
 An echo in my country's heart,
 Be in its home-affections shrined,
 Form of its cherished things a part !
 Be like wild flowers and common air,
 Blooming for all, breathed everywhere, —
 Or like the glad song of the bird,
 Gushing for all, *felt* more than *heard* !
 Earnest, untiring, might they be
 Like barks before a breeze at sea,
 Whose dashing prows point home, —
 Like good knights bound for Palestine,
 Like artists, warmed by fire divine,
 O'er icy Alp and Apennine,
 Holding their way to Rome, —
 Like arrows flashing through the fight,
 Like eagles on their sunward flight, —

Like to all things in which we see
An errand and a destiny !

And would to Heaven that Freedom's voice,
Wild, bold, defying, strong,
Might sometimes, like a martial strain,
Peal through my fearless song !
The soft-toned lays of sycophants
May mine yet ring above,
Clear as a clarion, and yet
Their very soul be *love* !

O, not that Love who deems her sphere
Is not where falls the mortal tear,
Not by the mortal's hearth,
As ministering angel here,
Far from her place of birth ;
With earnest, heavenward-gazing eye,
And spread wing fluttering for the sky,
All yearning to depart *she* seems,
And scarce permits, in her high dreams,
Her *feet* to touch the earth.
Away with such a love ! Be mine
A love more glorious, more divine,
That boweth to the Infinite,

When his *dimmed* image meets the sight,
 As 't were *all* glory and *all* light !
 That loves the wide world *as it lies*,
 With broken soil and clouded skies,
 With changing scenes and varied lots,
 And few flowers springing in the spots
 Where angel feet have trod !
 Let every theme with this be fraught,
 Let every lay, let every thought,
 Flash out this life of God.

A R I A D N E.

The demigod Theseus having won the love of Ariadne, daughter of the king of Crete, deserted her on the isle of Naxos. In Miss Bremer's *H—— Family*, the blind girl is described as singing "Ariadne a Naxos," in which Ariadne is represented as following Theseus, climbing a high rock to watch his departing vessel, and calling upon him in her despairing anguish.

DAUGHTER of Crete, how one brief hour,
 E'en in thy young love's early morn,
 Sends storm and darkness o'er thy bower,—
 O doomed, O desolate, O lorn !
 The breast which pillowed thy fair head
 Rejects its burden, and the eye
 Which looked its love so earnestly
 Its last cold glance hath on thee shed ;
 The arms which were thy living zone,
 Around thee closely, warmly thrown,
 Shall others clasp, deserted one !

Yet, Ariadne, worthy thou
 Of the dark fate which meets thee now,

For thou art grovelling in thy woe ;
Arouse thee ! joy to bid him go !
For god above, or man below,
Whose love's warm and impetuous tide
Cold interest or selfish pride
Can chill, or stay, or turn aside,
All too poor and slight a thing
One shade o'er woman's brow to fling
Of grief, regret, or fear, —
To cloud one morning's golden light, —
Disturb the sweet dreams of one night, —
To cause the soft flash of her eye
To droop one moment mournfully,
Or tremble with one tear !

'T is *thou* shouldst triumph ; thou art free
From chains which bound thee for a while ;
This, this the farewell meet for thee,
Proud princess on that lonely isle : —

“ Go, — to thine Athens bear thy faithless name ;
Go, base betrayer of a holy trust !
O, I could bow me in my utter shame,
And lay my crimson forehead in the dust,
If I had ever loved thee as thou art,
Folding mean falsehood to my high, true heart !

“ But thus I loved thee not ; before me bowed
 A being glorious in majestic pride,
And breathed his love, and passionately vowed
 To worship only me, his peerless bride ;
And this was thou, but crowned, enrobed, entwined,
With treasures borrowed from my own rich mind !

“ I knew thee not a creature of my dreams,
 And my rapt soul went floating into thine ;
My love around thee poured such halo-beams,
 Hadst thou been true, had made thee all divine.
And I, too, seemed immortal in my bliss,
When my glad lip thrilled to thy burning kiss !

“ Shrunk and shrivelled into Theseus now
 Thou stand'st : behold, the gods have blown away
The airy crown that glittered on thy brow, —
 The gorgeous robes which wrapped thee for a day ;
Around thee scarce one fluttering fragment clings, —
A poor, lean beggar in all glorious things !

“ Nor will I deign to cast on thee my hate ; —
 It were a ray to tinge with splendor still
The dull, dim twilight of thy after-fate.
 Thou shalt pass from me like a dream of ill, —

Thy name be but a thing that, crouching, stole,
Like a poor thief, all noiseless from my soul !

“ Though thou hast dared to steal the sacred flame
From out that soul's high heaven, she sets thee free,
Or only chains thee with thy sounding shame ;
Her memory is no Caucasus for thee,
And e'en her hovering hate would o'er thee fling
Too much of glory from its shadowy wing !

“ Thou think'st to leave my life a lonely night.
Ha ! it is night all glorious with its stars !
Hopes yet unclouded beaming forth their light,
And free thoughts rolling in their silver cars !
And queenly pride, serene, and cold, and high,
Moves the Diana of its calm, clear sky !

“ If poor and humbled thou believest me,
Mole of a demigod, how blind art thou !
For I am rich in scorn to pour on thee,
And gods shall bend from high Olympus' brow
To gaze in wonder on my lofty pride,
Naxos be hallowed, I be deified ! ”

* * * * *

On the tall cliff where, cold and pale,
Thou watchest his receding sail,

Where thou, the daughter of a king,
Wail'st like a wind-harp's breaking string,
Bend'st like a weak and wilted flower
Before a summer evening's shower, —
There shouldst thou rear thy royal form,
Like a young oak amid the storm,
 Uncrushed, unbowed, unriven !
Let thy last glance burn through the air,
And fall far down upon him there,
 Like lightning-stroke from heaven !
There shouldst thou mark o'er billowy crest
 His white sail flutter and depart,
No wild fears surging at thy breast,
 No vain hopes quivering round thy heart ;
And this brief, burning prayer alone
Leap from thy lips to Jove's high throne : —
“ Just Jove ! thy wrathful vengeance stay,
And speed the traitor on his way !
Make vain the Siren's silver song,
Let Nereids smile the wave along, —
O'er the wild waters send his bark
Like a swift arrow to its mark !
Let whirlwinds gather at his back,
And drive him on his dastard track !
Let thy red bolts behind him burn,
And blast him should he dare to turn ! ”

PYGMALION.



THE sculptor paused before his finished work, —
A wondrous statue of divinest mould.
Like Cytherea's were the rounded limbs,
The hands, in whose soft fulness, still and deep,
Like sleeping Loves, the chiselled dimples lay,
The hair's rich fall, the lip's exquisite curve.
But most like Juno's were the brow of pride,
And lofty bearing of the matchless head ; —
While over all, a mystic holiness,
Like Dian's purest smile, around her hung,
And hushed the idle gazer, like the air
Which haunts at night the temples of the gods.

As stood the sculptor with still folded arms,
And viewed this shape of rarest loveliness,
No flush of triumph crimsoned o'er his brow,

Nor grew his dark eye luminous with joy.
Heart-crushed with grief, worn with intense desires,
And wasting with a mad, consuming flame,
He wildly gazed, his cold cheek rivalling
The whiteness of the marble he had wrought.
The robe's loose folds which lay upon his breast
Tumultuous rose and fell, like ocean waves
Upheaved by storms beneath ; and on his brow,
In beaded drops, the dew of anguish lay.
And thus he flung himself upon the earth,
And poured in prayer his wild and burning words : —

“ Great Jove, to thy high throne a mortal's prayer
In all the might of anguish struggles up !
Thou hast beheld his work, as day by day
It put on form and beauty, till it stood
The wonder of the glorious realm of art.
The sculptor wrought not blindly. Oft there came
Blest visions to his soul of forms divine ; —
Of white-armed Juno, in that hour of love,
When, fondling close the cuckoo, tempest-chilled,
She all unconscious in that form did press
The mighty sire of the eternal gods
To her soft bosom ; — Aphrodite fair,
As first she trod the glad, enamoured earth,

With small, white feet, spray-dripping from the
sea ; —

Of crested Dian, when her nightly kiss
Pressed down the eyelids of Endymion, —
Her silvery presence making all the air
Of dewy Latmos tremulous with love.

“ And now (deem not thy suppliant impious,
Our being’s source, thou Father of all life),
A wild, o’ermastering passion fires my soul, —
I madly love the work my hand hath wrought.
Intoxicate I gaze through all the day,
And mocking visions haunt my couch at night ;
My heart is faint and sick with longings vain,
A burning thirst is parching up my life.

“ I call upon her, and she answers not !
The fond love-names I breathe into her ear
Are met with maddening silence ! When I clasp
Those slender fingers in my fevered hand,
Their coldness chills me like the touch of death !
And while my heart’s wild beatings shake my frame,
And pain my breast with love’s sweet agony,
No faintest throb that shining bosom stirs.

“O, I would have an eye to gaze in mine !
An ear to listen for my coming step, —
A voice of love, with tones like joy’s own bells,
To ring their silver changes on mine ear !
A yielding hand to thrill within mine own,
And lips of melting sweetness, full and warm !
Would change this deathless stone to mortal flesh,
And barter immortality for love !

“If voice of earth, in wildest prayer, may reach
To godhood, throned amid the purple clouds,
To animate this cold and pulseless stone
Grant thou one breath of that immortal air
Which feedeth human life from age to age,
And floateth round Olympus ! — Hear, O Jove !

“And so this form may shrine a soul of light,
Whose starry radiance shall unseal these eyes,
Send down the sky’s blue deeps, O sire divine,
One faintest gleam of that benignant smile
Which glows upon the faces of the gods,
And lights all heaven ! — Hear, mighty Jove ! ”

He stayed his prayer, and on his statue gazed.
Behold, a gentle heaving stirred its breast !

O'er all the form a flush of rose-light passed,
Along the limbs the azure arteries throbbed,
A golden lustre settled on the head,
And gleamed amid the mazes of the hair ;
The rounded cheek grew vivid with a blush,
Ambrosial breathings cleft the curvèd lips,
And softly through the archèd nostril stole ;
Slow rose the silken-fringèd lids, and eyes
Like violets wet with dew drank in the light !

Moveless she stood, until her wandering glance
Upon the rapt face of the sculptor fell ;
Bewildered and abashed, it sank beneath
The burning gaze of his adoring eyes.
And then there ran through all her trembling frame
A strange, sweet thrill of blissful consciousness,
Life's wildest joy, in one delicious tide,
Poured through the channels of her new-born heart,
And love's first sigh rose quivering from her breast.

She turned, and, smiling, bent her toward the
youth,
And blushed love's dawn upon him as he knelt.
He rose, sprang forward with a passionate cry,
And joyously outstretched his waiting arms ;—

And lo! the form he sculptured from the stone,
Instinct with life, and radiant with soul,
A breathing shape of beauty, soft and warm,
Of mortal womanhood, all smiles and tears,
In love's sweet trance upon his bosom lay.

THE HORSEBACK RIDE.



WHEN troubled in spirit, when weary of life,
When I faint 'neath its burdens, and shrink from its strife,
When its fruits, turned to ashes, are mocking my taste,
And its fairest scene seems but a desolate waste,
Then come ye not near me, my sad heart to cheer,
With friendship's soft accents, or sympathy's tear.
No pity I ask, and no counsel I need,
But bring me, O, bring me, my gallant young steed,
With his high archèd neck, and his nostril spread wide,
His eye full of fire, and his step full of pride !
As I spring to his back, as I seize the strong rein,
The strength to my spirit returneth again !
The bonds are all broken that fettered my mind,
And my cares borne away on the wings of the wind ;
My pride lifts its head, for a season bowed down,
And the queen in my nature now puts on her crown !

Now we 're off, — like the winds to the plains whence
they came,
And the rapture of motion is thrilling my frame !
On, on speeds my courser, scarce printing the sod,
Scarce crushing a daisy to mark where he trod !
On, on like a deer, when the hound's early bay
Awakes the wild echoes, away, and away !
Still faster, still farther, he leaps at my cheer,
Till the rush of the startled air whirs in my ear !
Now 'long a clear rivulet lieth his track, —
See his glancing hoofs tossing the white pebbles back !
Now a glen, dark as midnight, — what matter ? — we 'll
down,
Though shadows are round us, and rocks o'er us frown ;
The thick branches shake, as we 're hurrying through,
And deck us with spangles of silvery dew !

What a wild thought of triumph, that this girlish hand
Such a steed in the might of his strength may command !
What a glorious creature ! Ah ! glance at him now,
As I check him awhile on this green hillock's brow ;
How he tosses his mane, with a shrill, joyous neigh,
And paws the firm earth in his proud, stately play !
Hurrah ! off again, dashing on as in ire,
Till the long, flinty pathway is flashing with fire !

Ho ! a ditch ! — Shall we pause ? No ; the bold leap
we dare,

Like a swift-wingèd arrow we rush through the air !

O, not all the pleasures that poets may praise,

Not the wildering waltz in the ball-room's blaze,

Nor the chivalrous joust, nor the daring race,

Nor the swift regatta, nor merry chase,

Nor the sail, high heaving waters o'er,

Nor the rural dance on the moonlight shore,

Can the wild and thrilling joy exceed

Of a fearless leap on a fiery steed !

FANNY FORESTER.



A THOUSAND sweet ties bind her here,—
O friend! thy fears are vain!
The blessed angels will not break
So soon this golden chain;
And God, our God, who loveth her,
Shall breathe on her again!

The languor of her step shall yet
With winter snows depart;
Her feet shall spring o'er carpets wrought
By Flora's loving art,
And keep time to the joyous beat
Of her exulting heart!

Spring flowers, — they must, to one like her,
Bring life in their perfume;

Though lilies mind us of the young,
Pale bending to the tomb,
She shall tread among the violets
Before the lilies bloom !

Yes, when the summer roses blush,
Her cheek shall catch their glow ;
And when the summer birds return,
Her tones, no longer low,
Shall, like their strains, on raptured ears
In waves of music flow.

Our souls' arms are around her thrown !
She *must not* pass away
Now, when, too humble for the proud,
Too lonely for the gay,
The altar of sweet Poesy
Is falling to decay !

O, there may we behold her yet
In her young beauty bow !
There may we hear her glad lip breathe
Her consecration vow,
Earth's warm life lighting up her eye, —
Its glory on her brow !

There long a priestess may she serve,
 With vestments pure and fair,
There offer up her wingèd dreams,
 Young doves from heaven's own air,
And pour the rich wine of her soul
 As a libation there !

THE RESTORED.



OUR Father, when our loved one lay
With her languid eyes half closed,
When the darkening shadow of the grave
On her sunny brow reposed,
'Mid our woe thou didst send thy spirit down
To renew her failing breath,
And 'mid our joy we bless Thee now,
O thou God of life and death !

Ah, when she turned from the shadowy vale,
From the night that gloomed before her,
A new life burst, like a tropical day,
In surpassing glory, o'er her !
The stars pour down a purer light,
The sunbeams richer fall,
And sweeter far through the arch of heaven
Sounds the wild-bird's early call.

And each low wind that murmurs by,
Or lingers on her brow,
Seems a whisper from the realm of peace,
The kiss of angels now ;
And flowers are far more blessed things, —
The lowliest that bloom
Bear tracings of the loving hand
That raised her from the tomb.

Though she seemeth yet, with her noiseless step,
Some fair and fleeting shade,
And her voice hath the sound of a silver brook,
Low rippling down the glade ; —
Though faint the flush that sometimes comes
Her glowing dreams to speak,
As the shadow of a rose-leaf cast
On a sculptured Psyche's cheek ; —

Life, life, is thrilling through her veins !
And her heart, these warm spring hours,
Waked to new raptures and new loves,
Seems beating under flowers,
Like a pulse in the brow of a young May Queen,
Just crowned in her morning bowers.

That from her door to the place of graves
The path is yet untrod, —
That we have not pressed on her warm young breast
The icy burial sod, —
That she sleepeth, and waketh, and is not dead,
We bless thee, O our God !

D R E A M S.



THERE was a season when I loved
The calm and holy night, —
When, like yon silvery evening star,
Just trembling on our sight,
My spirit through its heaven of dreams
Went floating forth in light.

Night is the time when Nature seems
God's silent worshipper,
And ever with a chastened heart,
In unison with her,
I laid me on my peaceful couch,
The day's dull cares resigned,
And let my thoughts fold up like flowers,
In the twilight of the mind.

Fast round me closed the shades of sleep ;
Then burst upon my sight
Visions of glory and of love,
The stars of slumber's night !
Dreams, wondrous dreams, that far around
Did such rich radiance fling,
As the sudden first unfurling
Of a young angel's wing.
Then sometimes blessed beings came,
Parting the midnight skies,
And bore me to their shining homes,
The bowers of Paradise ;
I felt my worn, world-wearied soul
Bathed in divine repose,
My earth-chilled heart, in the airs of heaven,
Unfolding as a rose.

Nor were my dreams celestial all,
For oft along my way
Clustered the scenes and joys of home,
The loves of every day ;
Soft after angel-music still
The voices round my hearth, —
Sweet after Paradisean flowers
The violets of earth.

But now I dread the night, — it holds
 Within its weary bounds
Strife, griefs and fears, red battle-fields,
 And spectre-haunted grounds !

One night there sounded through my dreams
 A trumpet's stirring peal,
And then methought I went forth armed,
 And clad in glittering steel,
And sprang upon a battle steed,
 And led a warrior band,
And we swept, a flood of fire and death,
 Victorious through the land !
O, what wild rapture 't was to mark
 My serried ranks advance,
And see amid the foe go down
 Banner and plume and lance !
The living trampled o'er the dead, —
 The fallen, line on line,
Were crushed like grapes at vintage-time,
 And blood was poured like wine !
My sword was dripping to its hilt,
 And this small, girlish hand,
Planted the banner, lit the torch,
 And waved the stern command.

How swelled and burned within my heart
Fierce hate and fiery pride, —
My very soul rode like a bark
On the battle's stormy tide !

My pitying and all woman's soul !
O, no, it was not *mine* !
Perchance mine slumbered, or had left
Awhile its earthly shrine ;
So the spirit of a Joan d'Arc
Stole in my sleeping frame,
And wrote her history on my heart,
In words of blood and flame.

My dead are with me in my dreams,
Rise from their still, lone home, —
But are they as I loved them here ?
O Heaven, 't is *thus* they come !
Silent and cold, — the pulseless form
In burial garments dressed,
The pale hands holding burial flowers,
Close folded on the breast !

My living, — they in whose tried hearts
My wild, impassioned love

Foldeth its wings contentedly,
And nestles as a dove, —
They come, they hold me in their arms ;
My heart, with joy oppressed,
Seems panting 'neath its blessed weight,
And swooning in my breast ;
My eyes look up through tears of bliss,
Like flowers through dews of even,
There 's a painful fulness in my lips,
Till the kiss of love is given ; —
When, sudden, *their* fresh glowing lips
Are colorless and cold,
And an icy, shrouded corse is all
My shuddering arms enfold !

Have I my guardian angels grieved,
That they have taken flight ?
Or frown'st thou on me, O my God,
In the visions of the night ?
Yet with a child's fond faith I rest
Still on thy fatherhood, —
Speak peace unto my troubled dreams,
Thou merciful and good !
And, O, if cares and griefs must come,
And throng my humble way,

Then let me, strengthened and refreshed,
 Strive with them in the day,
This glorious world which thou hast made
 Spread out in bloom before me,
Thy blessed sunshine on my path,
 Thy radiant skies hung o'er me.
But when, like ghosts of the sun's lost rays,
 Come down the moonbeams pale,
And the dark earth lies like an Eastern bride
 Beneath her silvery veil,
Then let the night, with its silence deep,
 Its dews and its starry gleams,
Be peace, and rest, and love ! — O God,
 Smile on me in my dreams !

THE WIFE'S APPEAL.



I 'M thinking, Charles, 't is just a year,
Or will be, very soon,
Since first you told me of your love,
One glorious day in June.

All nature seemed to share our bliss,—
The skies hung warm above,
The winds from opening roses bore
The very breath of love !

We sought the still, deep forest shades,
Within whose leafy gloom
Few ardent sunbeams stole to kiss
The young buds into bloom ;

The birds caught up our tones of love,
In songs not half so sweet,
And earth's green carpet, violet-flowered,
It scarcely felt our feet !

Ah, *apropos* of carpets, Charles,
I looked at some to-day,
Which you will purchase, — won't you, dear,
Before our next *soiree* ?

And then remember you how lost
In love's delicious dream,
We long stood silently beside
A gently gliding stream ?

'T was Nature's mirror, — when your gaze
No longer I could bear,
I modestly cast down my eyes,
Yet but to meet it there !

And *apropos* of mirrors, love,
The dear gift of your mother
Is quite old-fashioned, — and to-day
I ordered home another.

Ah, well do I remember, Charles,
When first your arm stole round me, —
You little dreamed how long your *soul*
In golden chains had bound me !

And *apropos* of chains, my own,
At Allen's shop last week
I saw the *sweetest love*, so rich,
So tasteful and unique !

The workmanship is most superb,
The gold most fine and pure, —
I quite long, Charles, to see that chain
Suspend your miniature !

I've heard sad news while you were out, —
My nerves are much affected, —
You know the navy officer
I once for you rejected ;

Driven to despair by your success,
Made desperate by my scorn,
He went to sea, — and has been lost
In passing round Cape Horn !

Ah, *apropos* of capes, my love,
I saw one in Broadway,
Of lace as fine as though 't were wove
Of moonlight, by a fay !

You 'll purchase the exquisite thing ?
'T will suit your taste completely ;
Above the heart that loves you, Charles,
'T will rise and fall so sweetly !

THE STORY OF A LIFE.



THE world smiled on me at my birth, —
Beneath a rose-hued sky,
Rocked on the summer waves of love,
My childhood glided by.

My boyhood passed in lofty dreams,
In longings for the strife,
The glory, and the pageantry,
The tournament of life.

At manhood's age, a being proud
And passionate, I stood ;
Gold, lands, were mine, and through my veins
Went leaping princely blood.

Then Pleasure held her goblet high,
And called on me to drain
The glowing wine quaffed by the gods,
Till madness fired my brain ;

She mocked and tortured by delay, —
Then, at my frenzied call,
She offered to my burning lip
The cup, and it was gall.

I won a friend by generous deeds, —
One with an open brow ;
He bound his very life to mine
With many a holy vow.

Then fell the bolt, — I was betrayed !
By cool, insidious art, —
By words that, like barbed arrows, still
Are quivering in my heart.

At last unto my bosom came,
In gentlest guise, young Love ;
It crept into its resting-place,
A sweet and quiet dove.

I warmed it in my inmost heart,
Closed from the world's chill air ; —
O, 't was a rapture caught from heaven
To feel it 'nestling there !

But ah ! one morn, from visions blest,
I wakened with a moan ;
There was a *vulture* at my breast,
And that young dove had flown !

Then Fame held forth her laurel crown,
From her proud height afar ;
I longed for it, as does a child
At evening for a star.

I toiled, I suffered, — humble joys
I careless flung aside,
Saw peace take wing, and in the dust
Bow down my manly pride.

At last, at last, it bound my brow,
That green immortal wreath !
Exulting, glorying, I stood,
Defying time and death !

Yet soon I would have given worlds
To fling it off again,
For thorns were hid among the leaves,
That pierced me to the brain !

Now is my life a storm-wrecked bark,
Dashed by time's surges high
Upon a bare, cold island rock,
Beneath a northern sky.

There, in that realm where hearts congeal,
The spirit's frozen zone,
A joyless, cheerless, loveless age,
I stand alone, — alone.

RECONCILIATION.



Yes, all is well. The cloud hath passed away
That hung above our friendship's path awhile ;
For truth hath pierced it with a golden ray,
And love's own sunshine bathed it in a smile.

Yes, all is well, my brother. See, I place
My hand upon my late tumultuous heart,
And its soft pulses speak the calm of peace,
Which sweetest is just after storms depart.

Now let our friendship flow, like gentle river,
With no dark stream its silver waves to stain ;
And, O, let no cold wintry iceberg ever
Come floating down its summer tide again !

Let naught disturb our harmony of soul,
Let nothing come between thy heart and mine,
But let the circling years, as on they roll,
Still bring us more of sympathy divine.

We are but one remove from heavenly birth,—
Let heavenly truth be on each lip and brow;
Let us be free, — let not the dust of earth
Weigh down the white wings of our spirits now.

So when we tread Eternity's dim shore
Our souls may know each other, and rejoice
That no disguise in earthly life they wore,
And spirit voice may answer spirit voice !

PUTNAM.



LET the haughty smile, the low defame,
 The heartless worldling mock ;
 I thank my God *my* fathers came
 Of the good old Pilgrim stock !

I thank my God, through this heart bounds
 Blood from that hero band ;
 That my sire first opened his young eyes
 Where Northern plains expand ;
 That my mother's first breath was the air
 Of Putnam's glorious land !

Our own brave Putnam ! worthy thou
 Such rare and knightly praise
 As warrior bards of a warrior race
 Wove in their triumph-lays,
 And sang aloud to their sounding harps,
 In the old heroic days.

When Freedom first her standard reared,
Her sword first girded on, —
When her rally first from Concord rang,
And pealed from Lexington, —
Thou heard'st with triumph in thine eye,
And proud, uplifted brow,
And, like the patriot Roman, went
To glory from the plough !

Thy voice rang like a clarion out
On Bunker's trampled height ;
Thy sword gleamed like a meteor through
The thick cloud of the fight ;
Where cannon boomed, where bayonets clashed,
There was thy fiery way,
And thy blows came down, a storm of death,
On the foe that fearful day.

Thy daring ride adown the rocks, —
Have chivalry's bold days
A deed of wilder bravery
In all their stirring lays ?
The veteran loves to tell the tale,
When night enwraps the earth,
And youthful forms all eager crowd
Around the household hearth.

The listeners, — how, as with hushed breath
They drink in every word,
Is the martial spirit through their veins
Like a stream of lightning poured !
How eye meets eye in a kindred blaze,
Like the flash of sword on sword !

The Briton, on the hill's high brow,
With levelled arms, they see ;
And thou below, — thy gray war-steed
Dashing on gallantly.
A shout springs to their lips, their souls
Go leaping down with thee !

Like Wolfe, upon the crimsoned turf
It was not thine to lie,
The cannon's roar in thy dying ear,
The strife in thy dying eye ;
With thy country's banner o'er thy head,
Unrolling broad and free,
And with thy passing spirit thrilled
By shouts of " Victory ! "

But by the hands of Peace and Love
Thy white death-couch was spread ;

And Hope unfurled her starry wing
In glory o'er thy head.

In the sweet May-time, when flowers awoke,
And earth was very fair,
To the bending heaven the soldier's soul
Uprose on the breath of prayer,
And the shout of "Victory!" — here unheard —
Was the soldier's welcome there.

INVOCATION TO MOTHER EARTH.



O EARTH ! thy face hath not the grace
That smiling Heaven did bless,
When thou wert "good," and blushing stood
In thy young loveliness ;
And mother dear, the smile and tear
In thee are strangely met ;
Thy joy and woe together flow, —
But, ah, we love thee yet !

Thou still art fair, when morn's fresh air
Thrills with the lark's sweet song ;
When Nature seems to wake from dreams,
And laugh and dance along ;
Thou 'rt fair at day, when clouds all gray
Fade into glorious blue ;
When sunny hours fly o'er the flowers,
And kiss away the dew.

Thou 'rt fair at eve, when skies receive
The last smiles of the sun ;
When through the shades that twilight spreads
The stars peep, one by one ;
Thou 'rt fair at night, when full starlight
Streams down upon the sod ;
When moonlight pale, on hill and dale,
Rests like the smile of God.

And thou art grand where lakes expand,
And mighty rivers roll ;
Where ocean proud, with threatenings loud,
Mocketh at man's control ;
And grand thou art when lightnings dart,
And gleam athwart thy sky ;
When thunders peal, and forests reel,
And storms go sweeping by.

We bless thee now, for gifts which thou
Hast freely on us shed ;
For dew and showers, and beauteous flowers,
And blue skies overhead ;
For morn's perfume, and mid-day's bloom,
And evening's hour of mirth ;

For glorious night, for all things bright,
We bless thee, Mother Earth !

But when long years of care and tears
Have come and passed away,
The time may be when sadly we
Shall turn to thee, and say, —
“ We are worn with life, its toils and strife,
We long, we pine, for rest ;
We come, we come, all wearied, home, —
Room, Mother, in thy breast ! ”

SPIRIT LONGINGS.



I LOOK upon life's glorious things,
The deathless themes of song,
The grand, the proud, the beautiful,
The wild, the free, the strong,
And wish that I might take a part
Of what to them belong.

Behold, the fearless Ship goes forth,
Where ocean billows sweep ;
Proud as a steed, swift as a bird,
She dashes through the deep !
Her drapery of snowy sail
Around her stately form, —
Majestic Juno in the calm,
Bellona in the storm !

Thus may I, on the sea of life,
Launch forth all strong and brave,
Wait through the lonely, tedious calm,
And breast the stormy wave.

Bold Eagle, gazer on the sun,
Child of the upper air !
In low, unworthy strifes and sports
He deigneth not to share :
Behold him in a mountain land,
When storm-clouds roll on high,
Upon the gathering tempest look,
With calm, uncowering eye !
Loud thunders peal and crash around ;
He knoweth no affright,
But spreads his wing upon the blast,
And speeds his upward flight !
Red lightnings blaze along his path,
And play around his form ;
He joys, he glories, he exults,
In striving with the storm !

Thus may my nature bear through life,
Whatever may betide,

A scorn of all things low and mean,
A stern and lofty pride ;
Thus may a dauntless, daring strength
Be given unto my soul ;
Thus, thus through tempests may it sweep
On, upward to its goal !

The bright, the beautiful, the glad,
The swift and silvery River !
Dim woods, dark rocks, along it frown,
But it laugheth on for ever !

Thus may my heart, a joyous thing,
Go laughing o'er the earth,
And nothing sadden, nothing awe,
Its careless, childlike mirth.

The blue, the broad, the deep, the strong,
The wild, unfettered Sea !
Methinks he might have taught the world
That God had made it free.
He lies at rest ; upon his breast
The stars are mirrored bright ;
He sees move through the courts of heaven
The lovely queen of night,

And his strong pulses bound to meet
Her sweet smile's placid light !
Though worlds, though all created things
Should threaten and command,
He lies at rest. But see, the winds
Are loosed from God's right hand,
And the sea-bird screameth with affright,
And the seaman steers to land !

Thus may this soul of mine be free,
Thus mirror things above ;
Thus may its soft tides ever swell,
Beneath the smile of love ;
Thus may the will of God alone
Move its unfathomed deep,
And wake its rushing, flashing thoughts
From their inglorious sleep.

A gentle Star, lit up in heaven,
And meekly beaming there,
Its quiet light comes trembling down
The sweet and silent air ;
Within the mist, behind the cloud,
Its living rays still shine,
Like sacred fires 'mid incense-wreaths
That circle round the shrine.

Thus may my life shine forth a star,
On all who walk in night,
Unquenched by mists, undimmed by clouds,
Till lost in morn's full light.

O spirit, be no more content
To dream, aspire, and long!
Grasp thou the grand, the beautiful,
The proud, the free, the strong!
I rouse ! no more for far-off good,
With folded hands, I pine ;
I seek, I yet *will find*, the springs
To quench this thirst divine !
And these, all these I covet now,
God helping, *shall* be mine !

TO A BEREAVED FRIEND.



THY Mary hath gone from thee ; — thou hast folded
For the last time her dear form to thy breast,
And on those lips, in softest beauty moulded,
The last, last kiss of yearning love hast pressed.

She hath gone from thee ; — thou hast seen her lying
Gasping away the life so dear to thee ;
And thou didst hold her hand while she was dying,
Till the long sleep stole o'er her tranquilly ; —

One after one didst feel thy heart-strings breaking,
As each faint pulse grew fainter in that hand ;
Though thou didst know that she was only taking
Her flight before thee to the better land.

It was the hand in love's devotion given,
When first she stood thy young and trustful bride, —
The hand which led thy children on to heaven, —
'T was hers who lived, joyed, suffered by thy side.

Yet there were stars in holy brightness shining
Down on the midnight path which thou hast trod ;
Didst thou not see her meekly earth resigning,
And leaning on the bosom of her God ?

She hath not left thee wholly broken-hearted ; —
Was it not thine to watch her latest breath ?
To print upon her lips, ere she departed,
The seal of love, the good-night kiss of death ?

And thou didst see no stranger hand composing
Her fair limbs in the attitude of sleep ;
Severing her tresses, and the fringed lids closing
O'er those dark eyes which now have ceased to weep.

And though thy Mary walks in highest heaven,
Ye were knit soul to soul, as heart to heart ;
The love to light your earthly pathway given
Was of that heaven to which she rose a part.

She placed her earthly being in thy keeping ;
When thou art anguished, can she be at rest ?
Will she not feel the tears which thou art weeping,
Like swift rain falling on her angel breast ?

And will she not, while now "the new song" learning,
Amid its pauses hear thy mournful sighs ?
Will she not feel a vain and painful yearning
To bear thee peace and comfort from the skies ?

Then mourn no more, — 't will sadden her in glory
To know how ceaselessly flow forth thy tears ;
And she will tell the angels the sad story,
How she hath left thee in thy night of years, —

A lone, despairing, broken-hearted mourner,
For one dear presence evermore to pine ;
And they will grieve that they should thus have borne her,
Even to heaven, from such a love as thine.

I NEVER WILL GROW OLD.



O, no, I never will grow old ;
 Though years on years roll by,
And silver o'er my dark brown hair,
 And dim my laughing eye,

They shall not shrivel up my *soul*,
 Nor dim the glance of love
My *heart* casts on this world of ours,
 And lifts to that above !

Now, with a passion for those haunts
 Where wild, free nature reigns,
With life's tide leaping through my heart,
 And revelling through my veins, —

'T is hard to think the time must come
When I can seek no more,
With step bold as a mountain child's,
Deep dell and rocky shore ; —

No longer on my swift young steed,
Bound o'er the hills as now,
And meet half way the winds that toss
The loose locks from my brow !

Yet still my *spirit* may go forth
Where fearless fancy leads,
May take at will as glorious rides,
On wild, invisible steeds !

Ye tell me as a morning dream
Shall pass away, ere long,
My humble, yet most passionate,
Adoring love of song.

No, no ! life's ills may throng my way,
And pride may bend the knee,
And Hope's bright banner kiss the dust ; —
But lofty Poesy

Shall fling their slavish chains aside,
And spurn their dark control ;
They never, never shall lay waste
That Italy of the soul !

My father, — pleasant years may pass,
Ere his last sun shall set ;
And — blessed be the God of life ! —
My mother liveth yet.

My sisters blend their souls with mine,
A laughing, loving band ;
A heaven-set guard along our paths,
Our six brave brothers stand.

While God thus pours the light of joy
As sunshine round my home,
O, I'll lay up such a store of loves
For the stormy days to come !

In the joy and grief of every one
I'll seek to share a part,
Till grateful thoughts and wishes fond
Come thronging to my heart.

The earnest praises of the young,
The blessings of the old, —
I'll gather them in, I'll hoard them up,
As a miser hoards his gold !

Those loves may die, yet hopeful trust
Shall leave me, fail me, never ;
I will plant roses on their graves, —
Vive la jeunesse for ever !

Smile on, doubt on, say life is sad,
The world is false and cold, —
I'll keep my heart glad, true, and warm, —
I never will grow old !

WANTED. — A THEME.



THE spring is here again, mother ! she bursts upon our
sight,
Like a young girl in her bridal dress, all bloom, and
love, and light ;
The birds from out the sunny South, Heaven-guided,
hither come ;
And earth is very fair, mother, far round our cottage-
home.

A spell is on my heart, mother, a deep, mysterious
spell ;
I feel the mighty tide of song within my spirit swell !
Then find for me a theme, mother, a theme to write
upon,
Ere breaks that spell, and ere that tide has ebbed away
and gone.

I could write of the fields, mother, the dark and waving
woods,
The bursting flowers, the clinging vines, the water-
falls and floods ;
But then the world would say, mother, although 't were
done up neat,
That I was in a beaten track, a-following that *Street*.

I might weave lays like rose-wreaths, mother, and fling
them left and right,
All odorous with the breath of love, and glowing with
its light ;
But though 't were all a sham, mother, wise ones
their heads would shake,
And they 'd say I was in love, mother, which were a
sad mistake.

I could write of the West, mother, — tell many a back-
woods tale ;
But “ Mary Clavers ” long ago chanced on that happy
trail.
And “ *went it with a rush,* ” mother, as all the world
agree,
And made “ *a powerful sight* ” of fun, and left no
laugh for me.

I could write on the wars, mother, the soldier's glorious life, —

I sometimes think it is my *forte* to sing of scenes of strife ;

But I 've avowed "peace principles," and may not call them back.

So I cannot write of war, mother, — I must take another tack.

The terrible might do, mother, — some wild, unearthly story ;

I might ride, for a Pegasus, a nightmare into glory.

But then that "Raven" there, mother, above that "chamber-door,"

I asked *him* if 't would be a hit, — quoth the raven, "Never more !"

I might plead for the poor, mother, the wronged and the oppressed,

And give a flash of freedom's fire, deep burning in my breast ;

But they 'd say I was a fanatic, a-battling with weak straws

Against the mighty Union, and the almighty laws.

The fooleries of the *beau-monde*, mother, should I
write on as I feel,

The ladies fair would vote me odd, and not at all
genteel ;

And ah, the lordly sex, mother, their ire would heav-
iest fall, —

They 'd vow I was a sour old maid, — and that were
worse than all !

I think I 'll off to bed, mother, — I 'm tired, and then
it 's late ;

The horse I rode this afternoon had such a shocking
gait !

So do not early break, mother, my deep and soft re-
pose,

For I love a morning doze, mother, — I love a morn-
ing doze.

HERVEY TO NINA. — MISS BREMER.



DIVIDED in our lives, and yet twin-hearted !
Our sad first parents shared a happier fate ;
When, from Love's Eden, dearest, we departed,
'T was ours to sever at the outer gate.

Ah ! yet I know, whatever path thou 'rt tracing,
Thy tearful eye is sometimes backward cast ;
Thou art not coldly from thy heart effacing
The thrilling story of our blissful past, —

When life was like a sunset's glories blended
With all the waking splendors of the morn,
And when, dear love, if some light showers descended,
It seemed 't was but that rainbows might be born,

O warm ! O beautiful ! O glorious season !
Like the first blushing-time of Cashmere's roses !
My soul forgets cold truth, and worldly reason,
And in thy lap of languid joy reposes.

In reveries delicious I revisit
Each spot where love's impassioned tale was told ;
Where moments passed of pleasure so exquisite,
Time should have marked their flight with sands of
gold.

Again upon my throbbing breast thou 'rt leaning,
O fondly, wildly loved one ! O adored !
Again come back thy words of tenderest meaning,
That once such transport through my bosom poured.

Again I feel the wish, intense and burning,
To live within thy life, to drink thine air ;
That deep, mysterious, and mighty yearning
Would draw me down from heaven, wert thou not
there.

A fount there was within each bosom flowing,
That gushed not water, but love's purple wine ;
Sparkling with rapture, and with passion glowing,
It maketh mortals for a space divine.

'T was joy to know thee of that fountain drinking,
Within my heart, upspringing but for thee,
And I of thine as deeply, all unthinking
There might be madness in that draught for me !

When all of bliss the earth-born may inherit,
Divinely lavish, was around us thrown,
And when the mystic union of the spirit
Had twined our glowing beings into one, —

Then were we parted ; Hope's ecstatic vision
Grew dim with tears, and Joy's young pinion furled ;
Pillowed on flowers, we had a dream Elysian,
And we have wakened in a stormy world !

Gone, gone for ever ! we beheld it vanish,
As a warm cloud melts in the blue above ;
Yet from our souls no power create can banish
The golden memory of that dream of love !

NINA TO HERVEY. — MISS BREMER.



CANST thou forget, beloved, our first awaking
 From out the shadowy realm of doubts and dreams,
 To know Love's perfect sunlight round us breaking,
 Bathing our beings in its gorgeous gleams?
 Canst thou forget?

A sky of rose and gold was o'er us glowing,
 Around us was the morning breath of May;
 Then met our soul-tides, thence together flowing,
 Then kissed our thought-waves mingling on their way:
 Canst thou forget?

Canst thou forget when first thy loving fingers
 Laid gently back the locks upon my brow?
 Ah, to my woman's thought that touch still lingers,
 And softly glides along my forehead now!
 Canst thou forget?

Canst thou forget when every twilight tender,
 'Mid dews and sweets, beheld our slow steps rove,
And when the nights, which came in starry splendor,
 Seemed dim and pallid to our heaven of love?
 Canst thou forget?

Canst thou forget the childlike heart-outpouring
 Of her whose faith knew no weak, faltering fears?
The lashes drooped to veil her eyes adoring,
 Her speaking silence, and her blissful tears?
 Canst thou forget?

Canst thou forget the last most mournful meeting, —
 The trembling form clasped to thine anguished breast,
The heart against thine own, now wildly beating,
 Now fluttering, faint, grief-wrung, and fear-oppressed?
 Canst thou forget?

Canst thou forget, though all Love's spells be broken,
 The wild farewell which rent our souls apart?
And that last gift, affection's holiest token,
 The severed tress, which lay upon thy heart?
 Canst thou forget?

Canst thou forget, beloved one? Comes there never
 The angel of sweet visions to thy rest?

Brings she not back the fond hopes fled for ever,
While one lost name thrills through thy sleeping
breast ?

Canst thou forget ?

SIRI, THE SWIMMER. — MISS BREMER.



WHEN evening with its breezy air
Succeeds the sultry day,
Let others wear, in crowds and glare,
The tranquil hours away ;
But be it mine to seek at eve
Yon lake of heavenly blue,
To lave my weary frame, and cleave
The shining waters through !

When first the fair moon's tender light
Steals up the cloudless sky,
Like plighted maiden to her knight,
Down shelving shores I fly !
My lord, constrained by kingliness,
Hastes not his love to meet,
Yet sends wave-messengers, who press
In homage round my feet.

I hear his gentle, wooing tone, —
I come, my lord, I haste !
Now are his arms about me thrown,
They circle round my waist !
Their fond clasp brings no fearful chill ;
Mine own extended wide,
I fling myself, with a joyful thrill,
On the bosom of the tide !

O, what delicious coolness flows
Through every quivering vein !
Fresh as a water-lily grows
My fevered heart again !
The spray leaps up to splash my brow !
My long hair, unconfined,
Is flung, like some young Nereid's, now
To tossing wave and wind !

A new and glorious life is mine, —
I seem to float through heaven,
And mark far down its blue depths shine
The golden stars of even !
Now farther from the shadowy shore,
Right cheerily away !
See, like the plashing of an oar,
My tireless arms' quick play !

And now, where none are nigh to save,
While earth grows dim behind,
I lay my cheek to the kissing wave,
And laugh with the frolicsome wind !
On the billowy swell I lean my breast,
And he fondly beareth me ;
I dash the foam from his sparkling crest,
In my wild and careless glee !

Then give to me the wild delight
To dash the billows through !
To bathe at once in moonbeams white,
And in the waters blue !
When, hurrying down from mountain caves,
The cooling night-wind sweeps,
O, a moonlight frolic with the waves,
A plunge through starlit deeps !

THE ARMY OF REFORM.



Yes, ye are few, — and they were few,
Who, daring storm and sea,
Once raised upon old Plymouth rock
“The anthem of the free.”

And they were few, at Lexington,
To battle, or to die, —
That lightning-flash, that thunder-peal,
That told the storm was nigh.

And they were few, who dauntless stood
Upon old Bunker's height,
And waged with Britain's strength and pride,
The fierce, unequal fight.

And they were few, who, all unawed
By kingly "rights divine,"
The Declaration, rebel scroll,
Untrembling dared to sign.

Yes, ye are few, for one proud glance
Can take in all your band,
As now against a countless host,
Firm, true, and calm, ye stand.

Unmoved by Folly's idiot laugh,
Hate's curse, or Envy's frown, —
Wearing your rights as royal robes,
Your manhood as a crown, —

With eyes whose gaze, unveiled by mists,
Still rises clearer, higher, —
With stainless hands, and lips that Truth
Hath touched with living fire, —

With one high hope, that ever shines
Before you as a star, —
One prayer of faith, one fount of strength, —
A glorious few ye are !

Ye *dare* not fear, ye *cannot* fail,
Your destiny ye bind
To that sublime, eternal law,
That rules the march of mind.

See yon bold eagle, toward the sun
Now rising free and strong,
And see yon mighty river roll
Its sounding tide along :

Ah ! yet near earth the eagle tires,
Lost in the sea, the river ;
But naught can stay the human mind, —
'T is upward, onward, ever !

It yet shall tread the starlit paths,
By highest angels trod,
And pause but at the farthest world
In the universe of God.

'T is said that Persia's baffled king,
In mad, tyrannic pride,
Cast fetters on the Hellespont,
To curb its swelling tide :

But freedom's own true spirit heaves
The bosom of the main ;
It tossed those fetters to the skies,
And bounded on again !

The scorn of each succeeding age
On Xerxes' head was hurled,
And o'er that foolish deed has pealed
The long laugh of a world.

Thus, thus, defeat, and scorn, and shame,
Is his, who strives to bind
The restless, leaping waves of thought,
The free tide of the mind.

THE LEAP FROM THE LONG BRIDGE.

AN INCIDENT AT WASHINGTON.

A woman once made her escape from the slave-prison, which stands midway between the Capitol and the President's house, and ran for the Long Bridge, crossing the Potomac to the extensive grounds and woodlands of Arlington Place.

Now rest for the wretched. The long day is past,
And night on yon prison descendeth at last.
Now lock up and bolt. — Ha, jailer ! look there !
Who flies like a wild-bird escaped from the snare ?
A woman, — a slave ! Up ! out in pursuit,
While linger some gleams of the day !
Ho ! rally thy hunters, with halloo and shout,
To chase down the game, — and away !

A bold race for freedom ! — On, fugitive, on !
Heaven help but the right, and thy freedom is won.
How eager she drinks the free air of the plains !
Every limb, every nerve, every fibre, she strains ;

From Columbia's glorious Capitol
Columbia's daughter flees
To the sanctuary God hath given,
The sheltering forest-trees.

Now she treads the Long Bridge, — joy lighteth her
eye, —
Beyond her the dense wood and darkening sky ;
Wild hopes thrill her breast as she neareth the shore, —
O despair ! — there are *men* fast advancing before !
Shame, shame on their manhood ! — they hear, they
heed,
The cry her flight to stay,
And, like demon-forms, with their outstretched arms
They wait to seize their prey !

She pauses, she turns, — ah ! will she flee back ?
Like wolves her pursuers howl loud on her track ;
She lifteth to Heaven one look of despair,
Her anguish breaks forth in one hurried prayer.
Hark, her jailer's yell ! — like a bloodhound's bay
On the low night-wind it sweeps !
Now death, or the chain ! — to the stream she turns,
And she leaps, O God, she leaps !

The dark, and the cold, yet merciful wave
Receives to its bosom the form of the slave.
She rises, — earth's scenes on her dim vision gleam,
But she struggleth not with the strong, rushing stream,
And low are the death-cries her woman's heart gives
As she floats adown the river ;
Faint and more faint grows her drowning voice,
And her cries have ceased for ever !

Now back, jailer, back to thy dungeons again,
To swing the red lash and rivet the chain !
The form thou wouldst fether a valueless clod,
The soul thou wouldst barter returned to her God !
She lifts in His light her unmanacled hands ;
She flees through the darkness no more ;
To freedom she leaped through drowning and death,
And her sorrow and bondage are o'er.

THE LAST GIFT..



I LEAVE thee, love ! In vain hast thou
The God of life implored ;
My clinging soul is torn from thine,
My faithful, my adored !
My last gift, — I have on it breathed
In blessing and in prayer ;
So lay it close, close to thy heart,
This little lock of hair !

I know thou wilt think tenderly
And lovingly on me,
Thou wilt forget my waywardness,
When I am gone from thee ;
Thou wilt remember all my love,
Which made thee think me fair ;
Thou wilt with many tears be-gem
This little lock of hair !

And yet, at last, thy grief's wild storm
Will sigh itself to rest ;
Then thou mayst choose another love,
And clasp her to thy breast ;
But when she hides her glowing face
In tearful gladness there,
O, do not let *her* hand displace
This little lock of hair !

The dark, rich hue thou oft hast praised,
This ringlet still shall hold ;
Still, as the sunlight on it falls,
Give out quick gleams of gold.
Though years roll by, no trace of change
Its glossy rings shall wear ;
It never will grow gray, beloved,
This little lock of hair !

And when the earth weighs chill and damp
Above my resting-place,
When fall moist tresses heavily
Around my cold, dead face,
'T is sweet to know a part of me
Thine own life-glow may share.
Thou 'lt keep it warm, love, always warm,
This little lock of hair !

Ah, dearest, see how pale and cold
Has grown this hand of mine !
No longer now it glows and thrills
Within the clasp of thine ;
I go ! — soon, where my dying head
Is pillowed with fond care,
No trace of me shall linger, save
This little lock of hair.

I see thee not ! — I faintly feel
The fast tears thou dost weep ;
Kiss down my quivering eyelids, love,
Thus, thus, and I will sleep.
I go where angels beckon me,
I go their heaven to share ;
Yet, with a longing envy, leave
This little lock of hair !

EMILIE PLATER.

The young Countess Plater did in truth *die for Poland*, though it was not hers to fall in the field. Her health was destroyed by the terrible hardships which she endured, and her heart broken that she had endured them in vain.

O RAINBOW of the battle-storm !

Methinks thou 'rt gleaming on my sight ;

I see thy fair and fragile form

Amid the thick cloud of the fight !

I mark thy glowing lips compressed,

Thy brows in haughty sternness knit,

The eager panting of thy breast,

The strange fire in thy blue eyes lit.

On, on, in maddest bravery dashing,

Thou lead'st thy band against their foes !

Now Russian blades are round thee clashing,

Now Russian ranks about thee close !

Before thy slender arm I see
The bearded Cossack reel and fall !
I hear thy voice, bold, clear, and free,
In charging cry and rallying call !

The young Pole hears it, — through his heart
There leaps a stronger, wilder life !
Again his eyes fierce lightnings dart,
Again he plunges in the strife !

The veteran, whose life is poured
Through countless wounds upon the plain,
Hears it, and grasps his dripping sword,
To strike for Poland once again !

O Heaven, and this was all in vain !
And, matchless maiden, it was thine
To carnage, pillage, and the chain
Thy dear, lost country to resign !

Was it for *this* from girlish days
Thy gentle frame thou hadst inured
To midnight chill, and noontide blaze,
And all a soldier's toils endured ?

For *this* had dreams of high endeavour,
Of triumph in the stormy strife,
Drowned with their trumpet-notes for ever
The music of a woman's life ?

Thy country, glorious, brave, and fair,
Thine all of life, thine only love, —
For her alone thy constant prayer
Rose burning to the throne above !

Her name alone thy heart's depths stirred,
And filled thy soul with warlike pride,
Which gave the maiden strength to gird
The falchion on her tender side.

Yet in thy last hours, dark and lonely,
Thou, so devoted, faithful, brave,
Didst ask, in sorrowing meekness, only
Of thy adoring land — *a grave*.

How was thy woman's soul betrayed,
When death's seal on thy brow was set !
Then thou didst weep above the blade,
So oft with life-blood vainly wet !

When Hope sighed out her glimmering light,
 When thou didst see Sarmatia lie
Bleeding and bound in slavery's night,
 Then was thy fitting time to die.

LOVE'S EMBLEMS.



THERE was a rose, that blushing grew
 Within my life's young bower ;
The angels sprinkled holy dew
 Upon the blessed flower.
I glory to resign it, love,
 Though it was dear to me ;
Amid thy laurels twine it, love,
 It only blooms for thee.

There was a rich and radiant gem
 I long kept hid from sight ;
Lost from some seraph's diadem,
 It shone with heaven's own light !
The world could never tear it, love,
 That gem of gems, from me ;
Yet on thy fond breast wear it, love,
 It only shines for thee.

There was a bird came to my breast,
 When I was very young ;
I only knew that sweet bird's nest,
 To me she only sung.
But, ah ! one summer day, love,
 I saw that bird depart !
The truant flew thy way, love,
 And nestled in thy heart !

THE LOST HEART.



“ SAY, have you found the heart I lost
As you and I, last night,
The fragrant, new-mown meadow crossed,
Beneath the sweet starlight ? ”

“ I have a heart ; but ere I show it,
’T is fair thou shouldst define
The private marks by which thou ’lt know it ;
No doubt the heart is thine.”

“ Well, ’t was not hard, nor very strong,
A loving, little heart,
Filled with sweet raptures and wild song,
But all unskilled in art.

“ ’T was like, in its free, joyous youth,
A bird upon the wing, —
A worshipper of love, and truth,
And every blessed thing.”

“ Well, here ’s the heart, so fond and true, —
I never could forsake it ;
Yet rightfully belongs to you
The priceless gem, — then take it.” .

“ I thank you, Sir. But hold, look here !
I said my heart was *small* ;
This great, warm, throbbing heart, ’t is clear,
Is not my heart at all !

“ Aha, a roguish plunderer thou !
So this nice heart is *thine* !
No matter though, I ’ll keep it now,
’T is most as good as mine.”

T H E R E S E.



A ROSE once pressed against thy lips,
Then gayly flung to me,
Is all the gift I treasure up
In memory of thee ;
It bringeth back that golden time,
Too beautiful to last,
The glad and love-lit past, Therese,
The glad and love-lit past !

Then comes the memory of the change
Which fell upon thy heart,
As falls the frost upon the rose
When summer suns depart ;
And now returns that weary time
With doubts and glooms o'ercast,
The sad and mournful past, Therese,
The sad and mournful past !

Young flowers, fair, quickly fading flowers,
Love's meetest emblems they,
For naught in life so fitly marks
Its swift and sure decay ;
O type of that frail, passing faith
So fondly set apart
To wither in its early dew,
And die upon my heart !

SONGS.



I.

No passionless creature of duty,
No child of capricious delay,
Our love, like the goddess of beauty,
Sprang into warm life in a day !
Around us her magic spells flinging,
She smiled as she saw we adored,
And then, in a burst of wild singing,
Her soul's morning raptures outpoured.

Ah, soon changed that song, born in heaven,
To farewells and passionate sighs !
For a mist, like the shadow of even,
Came over her violet eyes :
With Hope's golden sunshine around her,
On Joy's couch of roses half-blown,

Pale, cold as a snow-wreath, we found her ; —
Her glowing young spirit had flown !



II.

THOUGH now it were madness to cherish
The dream that enchained us so long,
Yet shall it not utterly perish,
For thou hast embalmed it in song :
Its story's exquisite revealing
Shall live on the lips of the young ;
Each change of its passionate feeling
Be gayly or mournfully sung.

Like honey-dew dropping on blossoms,
On hearts thy sweet numbers shall fall ;
Thy lays shall thrill desolate bosoms,
And tenderest visions recall ;
Now wild, like the rapturous greeting
That song-birds send down from above ;
Now sad, like the tremulous beating
Of hearts that are breaking with love.

III.

WE must silence, with words of cold reason,
The eloquent voice of the heart ;
For Love hath stayed out his brief season,
And spread his young wing to depart !
Though awhile round our memory he hovers,
He may smilingly offer no more
Fond words, the ambrosia of lovers,
Nor the nectar of passion outpour.

Our last tearful farewell is spoken,
Life's sweet morning-vision hath flown !
Each vow, each glad promise, is broken,
That twined our twin beings in one !
And severed are love's golden fetters,
And sympathy's silvery chain ;
*So please, Sir, return me my letters,
I may wish to use them again !*

VOICES FROM THE OLD WORLD: THE
FAMINE OF 1847.

A voice from out the Highlands,
Old Scotia's mountain homes !
From wild burn-side, and darksome glen,
And towering steep, it comes !
Is it the shout of huntsmen bold,
Who chase the antlered stag,
Who sound the horn and cheer the hound,
And leap from crag to crag ?
Is it the call of rising clans,
The cry of gathering men ?
Pours Freedom's rocky fortress forth
Its Gaelic hordes again ?
Throng round the Scottish chieftains
Such hosts as, long ago,

In mountain storms of valor
Swept down upon the foe ?
When hoarse and deep, like thunder,
Their shouts of vengeful wrath,
And the lightning of drawn claymores
Flashed out upon their path ?

Far other are the fearful sounds
Borne o'er the wintry wave, —
The cry of mortal agony,
The death-groans of the brave !
For once a foe invincible
The kilted Gael hath found ;
At length one field beholds him yield, —
Starvation's battle-ground !

Thus, thus come forth the mountaineers, —
Pale, gaunt, and ghastly bands,
Who westward turn their frenzied eyes,
And stretch their shrivelled hands !
And like the shriek of madness comes
Their wild, beseeching cry, —
“ Bread, bread ! we faint, we waste, we starve !
Bread, bread ! O God, we die ! ”

And shall they perish thus, whose sires,
Stout warrior-men and stern,
With Wallace battled side by side,
And bled at Bannockburn ?

Where Freedom's new-world realms expand
Where western sunsets glow,
A nation with one mighty voice
Gives back the answer, — *No !*
'T is ours, 't is ours, the godlike power
To bid doomed thousands live !
Then let us on the waters cast
The bread of our reprieve.
Give, give ! — when Scotia's proud sons beg,
O Heaven, who would not give ?

And forms of womanhood are there, —
The matron and the maid, —
Strange, haggard, famine-wasted shapes,
In tattered garbs arrayed.
And these are they whose beauties rare
Are famed in song and story !
And these are they whose mothers' names
Are linked with Scotland's glory !

Ah, they too gaze, with dim, sad eyes,
Out o'er the western main ! —
While there are beating woman-hearts
They shall not gaze in vain !
We rest not till we minister
To their despairing need ;
Give, give ! — O Heaven, who would not give
When Scotia's daughters plead ?

A voice from Erin's storied isle
Comes sweeping o'er the main !
Ha ! calls she on her sons to strike
For freedom once again ?
Or rises from her heart of fire
The pealing voice of song,
Or rolls the tide of eloquence
The burdened air along ?
Or, ringeth out some lay of love,
By blue-eyed maidens sung,
Or, sweeter, dearer music yet,
The laughter of the young ?

Far other is that fearful voice,
A sound of woe and dread !

'T is Erin mourning for her sons,
The dying and the dead !
They perish in the open fields,
They fall beside the way,
Or lie within their hovel-homes,
Their bed the damp, cold clay,
And watch the sluggish tide of life
Ebb slowly day by day !
They sink as sinks the mariner
When wrecked upon the wave,
"Unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown,"
No winding-sheet, — *no grave !*

To us her cry. Be our reply,
Bread-laden argosies !
Let love's divine armada meet
Her fearful enemies !
Give, give ! and feel the smile of God
Upon thy spirit lie ;
Draw back, and let thy poor soul hear
Its angel's parting sigh.
Give, give ! — O Heaven, who would not give
When Erin's brave sons die ?

O sisters, there are famishing
The old, with silver hair,

And dead, unburied babes are left
 To waste upon the air,
And mothers wan and fever-worn
 Beside their hearths are sinking,
And maiden forms, while yet in life,
 To skeletons are shrinking !

Ho, freight the good ship to the wale, —
 Pile high the golden grain !
A nation's life-boat spreads her sail, —
 God speed her o'er the main !
His peace shall calm the stormy skies,
 And rest upon the waters.
Give, give ! — O Heaven, who would not give
 When perish Erin's daughters ?

THE FLIGHT OF GENIUS.



WHERE in their Northern grandeur lie
 Old Ocean's craggy shores, —
Where waves give back the glorious sky,
And lift unceasingly on high
Their deep, majestic symphony, —
 An Eagle sunward soars !

Through upper air lies his flight's bold ring,
 And its portal-guarders frown ;
They throng with angry muttering,
Their rattling ice-shot round him fling,
But he shakes the small hail from his wing,
 And royally soars on !

Yet a sterner, darker strife is nigh ;
 Wild storms come sweeping down ;
Their thunders peal through the trembling sky,
Their red lights gleam on the quivering eye,
Small birds to their leafy coverts fly,
 But the Eagle still soars on !

Gaze high ! for, the thunder's realm o'erpast,
 Now where warm glories spring,
Where no storm his way may overcast,
Outsoaring the lightning and the blast,
Lo, a golden cloud receives at last
 The bird of the mighty wing !

LOVE-LETTER TO A FRIEND.



DEAR Anna, hast ne'er heard it told
How florists have the curious power
To graft on some rude garden-plant
A tender and exquisite flower?
Thus are our natures made as one,
In union mystic and divine;
Thus, sweetest rose of womanhood,
Thy life is blooming into mine.

"Forget" thee! Whence the childish fear?
Ah, vain would be such heart-recalling!
Have I not felt thine angel smiles, —
Thy tears upon my bosom falling?
How oft, when, through our lattice stealing,
The moonlight came in quivering gleams,
When thou wert by my side reposing,
Thy spirit busy with its dreams, —

In love that would not let me sleep,
I hung above thy tranquil rest,
Whose soft, low breathings scarcely stirred
The snowy folds upon thy breast,
And watched to see thy starry eyes
Beam from their blue-veined lids' eclipse,
And drank thy very breath, and kissed
The night-dew from thy rose-bud lips !

As one in moon-lit, star-crowned night
Marks not the dark and envious shades
That lurk within the garden-bower,
Or glide along the forest-glades ;
Thus heed I not life's shadows dim,
Though gathering fast, around, above,
The blessed while 't is mine to feel
The silvery presence of thy love.

ILLUMINATION FOR VICTORIES IN MEXICO.



LIGHT up thy homes, Columbia,
For those chivalric men
Who bear to scenes of warlike strife
Thy conquering arms again,
Where glorious victories, flash on flash,
Reveal their stormy way, —
Resaca's, Palo Alto's fields,
The heights of Monterey !

They pile with thousands of thy foes
Buena Vista's plain ;
With maids and wives, at Vera Cruz,
Swell high the list of slain !
They paint upon the Southern skies
The blaze of burning domes, —
Their laurels dew with blood of babes !
Light up, light up thy homes !

Light up your homes, O fathers !
For those young hero bands,
Whose march is still through vanquished towns,
And over conquered lands !
Whose valor, wild, impetuous,
In all its fiery glow,
Pours onward like a lava-tide,
And sweeps away the foe !

For those whose dead brows glory crowns,
On crimson couches sleeping,
And for home faces wan with grief,
And fond eyes dim with weeping,
And for the soldier, poor, unknown,
Who battled, madly brave,
Beneath a stranger soil to share
A shallow, crowded grave.

Light up thy home, young mother !
Then gaze in pride and joy
Upon those fair and gentle girls,
That eagle-eyed young boy ;
And clasp thy darling little one
Yet closer to thy breast,
And be thy kisses on its lips
In yearning love impressed.

In yon beleaguered city
 Were homes as sweet as thine ;
There trembling mothers felt loved arms
 In fear around them twine, —
The lad with brow of olive hue,
 The babe like lily fair,
The maiden with her midnight eyes,
 And wealth of raven hair.

The booming shot, the murderous shell,
 Crashed through the crumbling walls,
And filled with agony and death
 Those sacred household halls !
Then, bleeding, crushed, and blackened, lay
 The sister by the brother,
And the torn infant gasped and writhed
 On the bosom of the mother !

O sisters, if ye have no tears
 For fearful tales like these,
If the banners of the victors veil
 The victim's agonies,
If ye lose the babe's and mother's cry
 In the noisy roll of drums,
If your hearts with martial pride throb high,
 Light up, light up your homes !

VALENTINES.

WRITTEN FOR MISS L——'s VALENTINE PARTIES.



TO FITZ-GREENE HALLECK.

MUST silence rest upon thy lyre,
 And will thy hand awake it never?
 And must the great deeps of thy soul
 Remain becalmed for ever?

O for a midnight storm of song!
 The peal of arms, the blaze of glory,
 Like that which once aroused a world, —
 Thy Grecian hero's story!

O for a generous burst of song!
 Like that which once new splendor shed
 Round the "pilgrim shrine" of a poet's grave,
 And deified the dead!

O for a mirth-born "Fanny," sent,
That troubled lives, half unawares,
Might take in dancing shapes of joy,
And banish spectre cares!

O for a lay, to crown the brave! —
Or rosy wreaths of love to twine,
To ring joy's bells, or start grief's tear,
If only it be *thine*!

Be hero-bard, — be minstrel gay, —
Thy song, if of thy soul a part,
Must bear a charmèd life, and live
Within thy country's heart.

TO A REFORMER.

"ENTHUSIAST," "Dreamer," — such the names
Thine age bestows on thee,
For that great nature, going forth
In world-wide sympathy;
For the vision clear, the spirit brave,
The honest heart and warm,
And the voice which swells the battle-cry
Of Freedom and Reform!

Yet, for thy fearless manliness,
 When weak time-servers throng, —
Thy chivalrous defence of right,
 Thy bold rebuke of wrong, —
And for the flame of liberty,
 Heaven-kindled in thy breast,
Which thou hast fed like sacred fire, —
 A blessing on thee rest !

'Tis said thy spirit knoweth not
 Its times of calm and sleeping,
That ever are its restless thoughts
 Like wild waves onward leaping.
Then may its flashing waters
 Be tranquil never more, —
They are "troubled" by an angel,
 Like the sacred pool of yore.



TO MISS C. M. SEDGWICK.

O GLORY-WEDDED ! to thy brow
 A coronal is given,
For which, when song and Greece were young,
 The very gods had striven.

O, find'st thou not that envied crown
A weary weight, and chilling?
Its lonely glory, is it not
An ice-touch, heartward thrilling?

Ah, no! e'en now a rosy light
Those vernal leaves is flushing;
O woman-hearted, love's warm buds
Are 'mid thy laurels blushing!



TO MR. GILES.

A CLASSIC heaven of old thy soul,—
Song, grace, and fire divine;
But the heaven of a purer faith,
That Christian heart of thine.

Thus he who walks beside thee
Hath what employ he chooses;
May worship with the Angels,
Or converse with the Muses.

TO BAYARD TAYLOR.

I SEND thee here no valentine,
I only dash thee off a line.
In trembling haste I send it, —
Give earnest heed to what I say ;
I've a grievous rent in my heart to-day,
I prithee, Taylor, *mend it!*

TO G. P. MORRIS.

APOLLO once had leave to travel ;
He sought our Yankee land,
And he lionized it through,
With his golden lyre in hand.

Once, at " a cottage near a wood,"
Which promised welcome's smile,
He thought, by *general* invitation;
To rusticate awhile.

One morn he woke, — he yawned, — he turned, —
Sprang up with fright and grief,
And cried, " *By George!* my lyre is stolen :
Without there, ho ! stop thief ! "

But vainly sought he east and west,
Half mad, — all broken-hearted ;
O, a most ungodlike look he wore,
With his glory all departed !

At last he turned Olympus-ward,
Thus lyreless, — woe 's the day !
For Juno frowned, and Venus wept,
And Cupid ran away !

Those *ennuied* gods and goddesses,
Upon their mount sublime,
O, had they not a weary lot,
A dull and dozing time !

One morn there rose upon the air
Most sweet, though mortal song,
By Zephyrus' glad wing upborne
To charm that heavenly throng.

Fair Venus bent her pearly ear,
Then earthward fixed her gaze,
And smiled a curious kind of smile,
Half pleasure, — half amaze.

“ I see a mortal bard, his hand
Across a lyre’s strings flinging,
And mortal lips catch up the strains,
Till all the land is ringing !

“ About him throng the fair and young, —
They crown him ! — I declare,
Fast by him stands my truant boy ! —
Apollo, dear, look there ! ”

The god rose from his cloud-divan :
“ Ha ! by my thundering sire,
I understand that game of *Morris*.
There ’s the thief that stole my lyre ! ”



TO MISS A. C. L——.

THY life is like a fountain clear, upspringing
Beside the weary way I ’m treading now ;
I love to linger near, and feel it flinging
Its pure baptism on my fevered brow.

Thy gentle heart is like the couch of resting,
That welcomes home the wanderer of the deep,
To my tired spirit, weary with long breasting
The midnight waves that round about me sweep.

Thy soul is like a silver lake at even,
Emblem of power, and purity, and rest, —
Within its depths the eternal stars of heaven,
While earth's fair lilies float upon its breast.



TO A POET.

TENDER and pale the young moon shone, —
The time of dreams stole o'er the earth,
Stillling the greenwood's sounds of mirth,
Hushing the wild birds to repose,
Save the nightingale, who warbled on,
Leaning his breast against a rose ;
'T was then from out a forest bower
Through shadows peered one wakeful flower,
Her azure robe with night-dews wet,
Watching a star through the purple even ;
And the star, though shining in highest heaven,
Smiled down on the violet ;

For a fairy mirror the flower held up, —
He saw himself in her brimming cup.

My soul is like that flower to-night,
Watching thy pathway through the sky,
The heaven of genius, far and high,
And waiting for thy smile of light
To pierce the shades that compass her,
Thy meek and hidden worshipper,
To where, with incense-breath up-stealing,
And brimming o'er with the dew of feeling,
That soul-flower faintly mirrors thee,
Thou risen star of Poesy !

TO THE WIFE OF A POET.

O FAITHFUL friend ! O gentle wife !
I know I may not add to-day
One drop unto thy " wine of life,"
Of love, or happiness, or pride ;
I know 't is only mine to lay
One rose-leaf on the mantling tide.

O, what without thy sunny face,
Lit with the day-spring from above,
Were thine abode of song and grace, —
Art's fairy realm, joy's resting-place, —
Where now a sacred trio meet,
Power, innocence, contentment sweet,
Genius and infancy and love !



TO THE WIFE OF AN ARTIST.

How like soft skies that bend at even
Italia's vales above,
Thy spirit's pure and tranquil heaven,
Illumed with stars of love !
Thy chosen one, no longer bound
Art's pilgrim, o'er the sea,
With Nature's self at home, hath found
His Italy in thee.

TO G. H. C.

As Linnæus wrote his name in flowers,
Thus, Artist, shall it ever be
That lily brows, carnation cheeks,
And rose-bud lips shall speak of thee !
As students of the stars have written
Their names upon the midnight skies,
Thus thou thy living name hast traced
On beauty's heaven, in starry eyes !

TO MR. INMAN.

MOORE tells us, in his dulcet lays,
A damsel, in the good old days,
Fell most imprudently in love
With some stray seraph from above ;
And once — so runs the tragic story —
This youth revealed his perfect glory,
Which, bursting forth in lurid flashes,
Consumed that beauteous maid to ashes !

There was a maid of modern times,
Who warning took from these sad rhymes,

And dreaming not an angel might
 With amorous sighs about her hover,
And asking not, and caring not,
 For so combustible a lover,
In life's strange drama wisely chose
 A safe and less ambitious part,
In man alone sufficient found
 For fancy, intellect, and heart.



TO ———.

WE never met ; yet to my soul
 Thy name hath been a voice of singing,
And ever to thy glorious lays
 The echoes of my heart are ringing.

We never met ; yet is thy face,
 Thy pictured face, before me now ;
Strangely, like life, I almost see
 The dark curls wave upon thy brow !

This face reveals that poet-life,
 Still deepening, still rising higher,
A breathing from thy soul of song,
 A glow from out thy heart of fire !

And yet, unlike thy portraiture
I would thy *living* face might be,
For ever, as I gaze on *this*,
Thine eyes are turned away from me.

TO COUNT ———.

WE need not to be told thou art
Of Rome's own glorious race ;
We hear her song breathe in thy voice,
In thy form behold her grace,
And her pure and classic beauty
In thy rare and thoughtful face.

That speaks her ancient honor,
Her proud immortal dower ;
It tells of her sad present,
Yet foretells her triumph hour, —
Hath the grandeur of her sorrow,
And the glory of her power.

TO ONE WHO KNOWS.

THEY told me, when I knew thee first,
Thou wert not made for loving,
That next St. Valentine's would see
Thy truant heart a-roving ; —

That thou wouldst weary of my love,
Turn from me, and for ever !
That I would meekly bow and weep,
But chide the rover never.

Ah ! those were mournful prophecies,
To cloud the sky of youth ;
And thou and I, we little thought
So soon to test their truth !

We are that sad truth's witnesses,
Proofs manifest and living, —
Thou art *for-getting* this poor heart,
And I am still *for-giving* !

TO HELEN IRVING.

AGAIN thou comest like a star of brightness, —
As pure and tender, as serene and fair ;
I hear thy tones of love, or joyous lightness !
I breathe thy presence like a balmy air !

They say that genius' sacred fount is gushing
Within thy soul of tenderness and truth ;
That glory's sunlight even now is flushing
The still and dewy morning of thy youth.

Thou little dreamest that perchance above thee
Fame's envied chaplet trembles in the air,
While crowned with roses in the hearts that love thee,
While homage sweet is offered to thee there.

Thy soul is loveliest ere fashion round it
Her robe of cold and glittering thralldom flings, —
Ere worldly art, with gilded chains, hath bound it,
Ere brushed the gold-dust from its fairy wings.

TO A POETESS.

A NAMELESS power lives in thy verse,
A gleam of things divine !
And with meek looks and claspèd hands
My spirit bows to thine.

Now beams thy soul-light on the heart,
Like morn-rise, soft and tender ;
And now in wild, impassioned fire
Breaks forth with startling splendor.

We say, when gently steal along
Thy light, love-breathing numbers,
That Song's sweet angel whispering bends
Above thy nightly slumbers.

Anon there peals from out thy lays
A voice so clear and bold,
That we might almost dream thou wert
A prophetess of old.

The eye glows with unwonted fire,
The soul's still depths are stirred ;
The heart leaps to intenser life
At every burning word !

We see on swift, untiring wing
The morning lark uprise,
Until his tuneful gush of joy
Floats faintly down the skies.

Thus *thou* art rising glad and free,
Thy wild song downward flinging,
Up toward the morning gates of heaven
Thy flight of glory winging.

TO THE HON. D. P. KING,

WITH AN AUTOGRAPH.

A CHILD of the Republic,
I have never bowed the knee
To coronets or sceptres,
To rank or royalty :

But when a royal nature,
Crowned with a royal name,
Devotes to holy freedom
His genius and his fame,
O, then my soul forgets her pride,
Then to the winds I fling
My democratic scruples,
And all that sort of thing ;
My spirit yields allegiance,
And prays, God save thee, King !

DARKENED HOURS.



WITH folded arms and drooping head
I stand, my heart's blest goal unwon,
My soul's high purpose unattained ;
But life, but life goes hurrying on !

I pause and linger by the way,
With fainting heart and slumbering powers,
And still the grand, immortal height
Which I would climb before me towers.

And still, far up its rugged steep,
The poet-laurel mocks mine eyes ;
While sweetly on its summit wave
The fadeless flowers of Paradise.

My voice is silent, though I mark
The toil and woe of human lives, —
The beauty of that human love,
That meekly suffers, trusts, and strives.

My voice is silent, though I see
The captive pining in his cell,
And hear the exiled patriot breathe,
O'er the wild seas, his sad farewell.

No song of joy is on my lip,
While Freedom's banners are unfurled,
And Freedom's fearless battle-shouts
And triumph-lays ring round the world.

No glow of rapturous feeling comes
To flush my cheek, or light mine eye,
While golden splendors of the morn
Are kindling all the eastern sky.

Nor when, while dew drops weigh down the rose,
I read amid the shadowy even
That bright Evangel of our God,
Whose words are worlds, the starry heaven.

Yet was my nature formed to feel
The gladness and the grief of life,
To thrill at Freedom's name, and joy
In all her brave and holy strife ;

To tremble with the perfect sense
Of all things lovely or sublime, —
The glory of the midnight heaven,
The beauty of the morning time.

God-written thoughts are in my heart,
And deep within my being lie
Eternal truths and glorious hopes,
Which I must speak before I die.

Who shall restore the early faith,
The fresh, strong heart, the utterance bold ?
Ah, when may be this weary weight
From off my groaning spirit rolled ?

To Thee I turn, before whose throne
No earnest suppliant bows in vain ;
My spirit's faint and lonely cry
Thou wilt not in thy might disdain.

Awake in me a truer life, —

A soul to labor and aspire !

Touch Thou my mortal lips, O God,

With thine own truth's immortal fire !

Be with me in my darkened hours ;

Bind up my bruised heart once more ;

The grandeur of a lofty hope

About my lowly being pour !

Give strength unto my spirit's wing,

Give light unto my spirit's eye,

And let the sunshine of thy smile

Upon my upward pathway lie !

Thus, when my soul in thy pure faith

Hath grown serene, and free, and strong,

Thy greatness may exalt my thought,

Thy love make beautiful my song.

THE DREAM.



LAST night, my love, I dreamed of thee,
Yet 't was no dream Elysian :
Draw closer to my breast, dear Blanche,
The while I tell the vision.

Methought that I had left thee long,
And, home in haste returning,
My heart, lip, cheek, with love and joy
And wild impatience burning, —

I called thee through the silent house ;
But here, at last, I found thee,
Where, deathly still and ghostly white,
The curtains fell around thee.

Dead !— dead thou wert ! Cold lay that form,
In rarest beauty moulded,
And meekly, o'er thy still, white breast
The snowy hands were folded.

Methought thy couch was fitly strewn
With many a fragrant blossom ;
Fresh violets thy fingers clasped,
And rose-buds decked thy bosom :

But thine eyes, so like young violets,
Might smile upon me never —
And the rose-bloom from thy cheek and lip
Had fled away for ever !

I raised thee lovingly, thy head
Against my bosom leaning,
And called thy name, and spoke to thee
In words of tenderest meaning.

I sought to warm thee at my breast,
My arms close round thee flinging ;
To breathe my life into thy lips,
With kisses fond and clinging.

O hour of fearful agony!
In vain my frenzied pleading!
Thy dear voice hushed, thy kind eye closed,
My lonely grief unheeding!

Pale wert thou as the lily-buds
Twined 'mid thy raven tresses,
And cold thy lip and still thy heart
To all my wild caresses!

* * * * *

I woke, amid the autumn night,
To hear the rain descending,
And roar of waves and howl of winds
In stormy concert blending.

But, O, my waking joy was morn,
From heaven's own portals flowing!
And the summer of thy living love
Was round about me glowing!

I woke, — ah, blessedness! — to feel
Thy white arms round me wreathing, —
To hear, amid the lonely night,
Thy calm and gentle breathing!

I bent above thy rest till morn,
 With many a whispered blessing ;
Soft, timid kisses on thy lips
 And blue-veined eyelids pressing.

While thus, from slumber's shadowy realm,
 Thy truant soul recalling,
Thou couldst not know whence sprang the tears
 Upon thy forehead falling.

And, O, thine eyes' sweet wonderment,
 When thou didst ope them slowly,
To mark mine own bent on thy face
 In rapture deep and holy !

Thou couldst not know, till I had told
 That dream of fearful warning,
How much of heaven was in my words, —
 “ God bless thee, love, — good morning ! ”

THE FIRST DOUBT.



My heart is chilled with sudden fear,
And heavy on my spirit lies
The doubt that breathed from thy harsh tones,
And looked from thy reproachful eyes.
And seest thou not love's mightiest spell,
Its pure and perfect trust, is broken,
By the cold thought thy heart hath nursed,
And the cold words thy lips have spoken?

Ah, thou of little faith! — Came then,
No gentle memories to thee?
No earnest tone, no still caress,
No smile, no tear, to plead for me?
Had all the love of all our past
No voices calling through thy heart?
Shone not mine eyes upon thy soul
A light to bid all clouds depart?

Though smiles and fond endearing names

Upon our lips once more may live,

Yet love hath ceased to be divine

When those who love must say, "Forgive."

Though morning skies are o'er us still,

Yet, sadder than the shades of night,

The shadow of thy first dark thought

Is hiding all our heaven from sight.

We drink no more at Hope's clear springs,

But bitter draughts of vain regret ;

Young Love who led us forth to life,

Rose-crowned and joyous, leads us yet, —

But tearful now his weary eyes ;

Faint smiles around his sweet lips play,

And red drops falling from his wounds

Stain all the flowers along his way.

Beware, O dearest, lest some shaft

May pierce his gentle heart at last,

And the dim light of his sad smile

No longer on our path be cast !

Lest, parting at his early grave,

With summer's perished blooms o'erstrown,

We go forth through the world's wide waste,

And tread its weary ways alone !

THE MIDNIGHT VIGIL.

BY THE SICK-BED OF A MOTHER.

THEY say a tempest is abroad to-night ;
 They tell me of its fearful sights and sounds, —
 Of driving rains, the rush and roar of winds,
 The plunge of torrents o'er the mountain side,
 The burst of thunder, and the lurid track
 Of the quick lightning, leaping down the skies !

But deeper midnight and a colder gloom
 Enwrap my life, — within my bosom reigns
 A wilder, sterner strife, — while bows my head,
 Bared to the peltings of a mightier storm !

The hour is nigh at hand, — the hour that oft
 Darkened my childhood's dreams in nights of fear ;
 Whose icy thought had e'er strange power to chill
 The bounding pulse of joy, since first my lips
 Essayed to lisp the most belovèd name.

Vainly my soul hath struggled ; — from her clasp
Life's earliest, dearest joy is torn away !
Her deepest, tenderest, thrice-blessed love,
A holy lamp within a sacred shrine,
Is dying out upon this midnight air !

O soul, so strong with hope and high resolve,
Brave and exultant once, but shrinking, faint,
Now, while the wine-press of a mortal grief
Thy steps are treading painfully and slow !
O heart that once unfolded into life,
Flower-like in gladness, lifting up toward heaven
A chalice for its sunshine and its dews, —
That drank in freshness with the morning hours,
And swayed to pleasant airs the livelong day,
Now, bruised and broken, bleed thyself away,
Earth cold beneath, and heaven all dark above !

This voice hath grown a stranger to mine ear ;
Faltering and sad its tones that lately rung
Such merry changes, — and the eyes that smiled,
And looked contentment from their deepest depths,
Grow wild, and darken with a great despair.

Silent I sit amid the waste of grief,
The desolation, the tempestuous gloom,

The deep convulsion of my inmost life ;
Save when a prayer of sternest agony,
Like some strong bird, goes forth amid the strife,
Through storm, and darkness, and cold, heavy clouds,
Battling its way toward heaven, — its weary way,
Where, 'mid the conflict soon o'ercome, it falls,
Dashed toward the earth by some relentless power.
But peace, my soul ! — *He* liveth yet, who looked
On woman's grief and " wept," — e'en while his voice
Rebuked the worm, and called the wasting dead
In life and freshness forth into the day ;
Who took the Jewish maiden by the hand,
And, with one word, gave back to mortal life
A spirit wandering in the deathless clime,
To lose the memory of her hour of heaven
In the sweet sadness of an earthly lot.

Once more my soul lifts up her bitter cry,
The fast outpouring of her grief and fear !
Once more falls at thy feet, and grasps thy robe,
And will not let thee go, Master of Life !

O, by the memory of *her* love, whose eyes
Looked tender adoration on Thee first,
Who warmed Thee at her bosom when the airs
Of the first morning breathed upon thy form,

And Bethlehem's dews made coolness round thy rest!
O, by that love still faithful when the child
Put on the name and presence of the God,
And went forth bearing on his mighty heart
The crime, and death, and sorrow of a world!
Still true 'mid want, and wrong, and jeering scorn,
And hate's mad tempest beating on thy life,
To that dread hour when heaven was veiled in gloom,
And nature trembled and cried out in fear!
O, by *thy* human love divinely sweet,
Which yearned for her caress to comfort Thee
In the long exile from thy heavenly home,—
Which in the last hour lived upon thy lips
In words of tenderness, and from thine eyes
Struggled through mists of death in mute farewell!
O, by thy love, thy sorrow, and thy pain,
By all the tears Thou 'st shed for mortal woe,
Let the imploring passion of my soul
Come up before Thee at this midnight hour!
Break not "the bruised reed," Most Merciful!
Stay Thou the bleeding of the wounded heart!
Give back its dearest treasure even now!
Draw near, O Lord of Life, and gently take
The hand of our beloved in thine own,
And say to her, "*Arise!*"

THE MAY MORNING.



THE morning brightness showereth down from heaven ;
The morning freshness goeth up from earth ;
The morning gladness shineth everywhere !
Soon as the sun, in glorious panoply,
Parting the crimson curtains of his tent,
Begins the day's proud march, the voice of song
And flush of beauty live along his way !
The maiden flowers, whom all the dreamy night
The starlight vainly wooed, with wan, cold smile,
Blush as his presence breathes upon their bloom,
And feel his kiss through all their glowing veins,
And shake the night-dew from their joyous heads,
And pour thick perfumes on the golden air.

The trees bow at his coming, and look brave
In all the richness of their new attire ;
The Aspen's shining leaves give back his smile,

Dancing in glee, yet whispering in awe,
Like bashful maidens at some gorgeous fête,
Graced by a monarch's presence ; aged Oaks
Grow young again at their stout, loyal hearts ;
The stately brotherhood of mountain Pines
Give forth a solemn greeting, like a band
Of stern old monks, in sombre vestments clad.
Like Ganymedè, the Magnolia stands,
Graceful and fair ; his silver chalice lifts,
Brimmed with night's nectar, to the thirsty god.
The garden Lilac, rich in purple bloom,
Scatters her royal largess far and wide ;
And the warm bosom of the opening Rose
Pants out its odorous sighs to the " sweet south,"
That soft-plumed, low-voiced rover from afar,
Whose wings are heavy with the perfume stolen
From the cleft hearts of his forsaken loves.
The Mignonette breathes tenderly and deep,
The pure home-fragrance of a humble heart ;
And even the tiny Violet can make
Her little circle sweet as love ; the Vine,
Swaying in mid-air to the frolic wind,
Rains scented blossoms on the clover tufts,
And cheerful daisies, lighting up the grass.
The Robin and the Oriole awake

With the first sunshine glancing on their wings,
To thrill the young leaves quivering round their nests
With glad, wild gushes of exulting song, —
To pour swift waves of clear, delicious sound,
Fresh and rejoicing, on the morning air.

The lake looks up to heaven, and smiles to see
Those vast, high courts with his own color hung ;
The waves, with whispers and low laughter, steal
Along the shore, to meet the honeyed kiss
Of the pale lilies, drooping faint with love.
Like some young mountain shepherd, whose fair maid,
Far down the vale, upon a gala morn,
Awaits his coming, the impetuous stream
Leaps down the hill-side, singing as it goes.

Yet, O fair sky ! O green and flowery earth !
Your morning gladness in this bright May-time,
With visible glow and music-utterance,
Is all imperfect, faint, and dim, beside
The viewless, voiceless, unimagined joy
That maketh bloom and sunshine in my heart,
That fills my soul with hopes more bright than flowers,
And thoughts far sweeter than the voice of birds !

The arctic winter which closed round me long,
And hung all heaven with tempests, hath gone by ;
The fear, the sorrow, and the wild despair
Which made a darkness deeper than the night,
And storm that mocked the loud and maddened strife
Of the roused elements, — all, all gone by !
A sky of love is bending o'er me now,
And airs serene are breathing round my paths :
The rich midsummer of my life is here !

O Thou, whose hand rolled back the clouds of fear,
Whose voice spake “peace” to sorrow’s whelming
 deeps,
And in mid-heaven stayed the shadowy wing
Of death’s swift angel, — what meet offering
Hath my glad soul to lay upon thy shrine ?
Prayers and rapt vigils ? or song’s votive wreaths,
Dewy with grateful tears ? a pilgrim’s vows ?
Saint-like observance of all sacred rites
And holy days ? Not these, not these, my soul ;
But the sweet offering of a loving heart, —
But the rich offering of a free-born mind, —
But the long offering of an earnest life.

WAR-SONG OF THE MAGYARS.



A BATTLE-SHOUT for Hungary

Once more shall wake the day, —

A joyful summons to the brave,

To rally for the fray ;

To gird her round, and, with their swords,

Make lightning on her way !

The shout that each bold Magyar heart

With war's fierce rapture fills,

The cry that in the traitor's veins

The coward current chills, —

Let it ring up from the valleys

And roll along the hills !

Let it sound amid the mountain land,
That mighty gathering cry, —
Go up from steep, and crag, and cliff,
Clear, terrible, and high,
Till the vultures and the eagles
Scream back their hoarse reply !

Like the mingling of all fearful sounds
Of vengeance and of woe, —
Like the rush of fire, the roar of floods,
When wintry tempests blow, —
Like the thunder of the avalanche,
It shall sweep against the foe !

God of the nations, Thou didst hear
Poor Hungary's patient prayer,
From the prison of her bondage
And the night of her despair,
When the groanings of her spirit
Were burdening all the air !

Thou didst flash upon her darkness
A great and sudden light ;
Didst break her chains, and lead her forth,
And gird her for the fight

With the weapons of thine anger,
And the armour of thy might !

Once more be thy victorious strength
On mortal hearts outpoured ;
Take Thou the blood-guilt from our strife,
And sanctify the sword
That strikes for Freedom ! For the right,
Make bare thine arm, O Lord !

§ less Thou our banners, till their folds
On Freedom's ramparts wave,
And shade the patriot's holy rest ;
O, strengthen, guide, and save
Our PROPHET-HERO to the end, —
God of the struggling brave !

THE POET'S HOME.



WE have struggled up the hill-side,
We stand upon its brow,—
O, lovely as a dream of heaven,
The scene before us now !

There singeth past the woodlands,
Where the listening aspens quiver,
There shineth through the meadows,
The beautiful, bright river.

And, farther off, old Ocean
Is lying at his rest,
With the warm and gentle sunlight
Asleep upon his breast.

But low down in the village
Is a cottage, white and small,
And to me that cottage seemeth
More glorious than all !

From out its portal floweth
A tide of minstrelsy,
That rolleth as a river,
And soundeth as the sea !

If in storm-shocks meet its waters,
Or in summer quiet glide,
A sun that knows no setting
Smiles on the crystal tide ; —

A sun across whose brightness
No lightest cloud is driven, —
The constant, kind approval,
The blessed love of Heaven.

A F R A G M E N T .



THOU darest not love me ! — thou canst only see
The great gulf set between us. Hadst thou *love*,
'T would bear thee o'er it on a wing of fire !
Wilt put from thy faint lip the mantling cup,
The draught thou 'st prayed for with divinest thirst,
For fear a poison in the chalice lurks ?
Wilt thou be barred from thy soul's heritage,
The power, the rapture, and the crown of life,
By the poor guard of danger set about it ?
I tell thee that the richest flowers of heaven
Bloom on the brink of darkness. Thou hast marked
How sweetly o'er the beetling precipice
Hangs the young June-rose with its crimson heart, —
And wouldst not sooner peril life to win
That royal flower, that thou mightst proudly wear

The trophy on thy breast, than idly pluck
A thousand meek-faced daisies by the way ?
How dost thou shudder at Love's gentle tones,
As though a serpent's hiss were in thine ear,
Albeit thy heart throbs echo to each word !
Why wilt not rest, O weary wanderer,
Upon the couch of flowers Love spreads for thee,
On banks of sunshine ? Voices silver-toned
Shall lull thy soul with strange, wild harmonies, —
Rock thee to sleep upon the waves of song ;
Hope shall watch o'er thee with her breath of dreams ;
Joy hover near, impatient for thy waking,
Her quick wing glancing through the fragrant air.

Why dost thou pause hard by the rose-wreathed gate,
Why turn thee from the paradise of youth,
Where love's immortal summer blooms and glows,
And wrap thyself in coldness as a shroud ?
Perchance 't is well for *thee*, — yet does the flame
That glows with heat intense, and mounts toward heaven,
As fitly emblem holiest purity,
As the still snow-wreath on the mountain's brow.

Thou darest not say I love, and yet thou lovest,
And think'st to crush the mighty yearning down,

That in thy spirit shall upspring for ever !
Twinned with thy soul, it lived in thy first thoughts, —
It haunted with strange dreams thy boyish years,
And colored with its deep, empurpled hue
The passionate aspirations of thy youth.
Go, take from June her roses, — from her streams
The bubbling fountain-springs, — from life take *love*, —
Thou hast its all of sweetness, bloom, and strength.

There is a grandeur in the soul that dares
To live out all the life God lit within, —
That battles with the passions hand to hand,
And wears no mail, and hides behind no shield, —
That plucks its joy in the shadow of death's wing, —
That drains with one deep draught the wine of life,
And that with fearless foot and heaven-turned eye
May stand upon a dizzy precipice,
High o'er the abyss of ruin, and *not fall* !

TO ONE AFAR.



O STRONG and pure of soul ! — O earnest-hearted !
Like stranger-pilgrims at some way-side shrine
Have we two met, and mingled faith, and parted, —
Thy pathway leading far away from mine.

The soul of ancient song is round thee swelling,
To triumph-marches leading on the hours ;
Thy life hath temped shades, where gods are dwelling,
Where founts Castalian play among the flowers.

But faintly may the voices of the ages
Come to my yearning but imperfect sense, —
The strength of heroes and the lore of sages,
The fire of song, the storm of eloquence.

Thy thoughts, their grand vibrations far out-flinging,
Like church-tower bells ring out the morning chime,
While flow my numbers like the gleeful singing
Of peasant maidens at the vintage-time.

Grandeur and power are shrined within thy spirit ;
It moves in deeps and joys in storm and night, —
While mine, of simpler mould, may but inherit
The love of all things beautiful and bright.

Truth's earnest seeker thou, — I fancy's rover :
Thy life is like a river deep and wide ;
I but the light-winged wild-bird passing over,
One moment mirrored in the rushing tide.

Thus are we parted, — thou still onward hasting,
Pouring the great flood of that life along ;
While I on sunny slopes am careless wasting
The little summer of my time of song.

AN OFFERING TO ANNA.



I SEND this ring of braided hair,
 A simple gift, to thee,
One more fond pledge of perfect trust,
 And perfect peace, from me.

Thou 'lt wear it for our dear love's sake,
 So fresh and pure and strong,
Far sweeter than the dreams of fame,
 Of romance, or of song.

And when snows fall, or spring-flowers wave,
 My cold, still breast above,
Dear, faithful heart, thou 'lt wear it then
 In *memory* of our love.

Bird of my bosom ! blessed shape
Of joy and song thou art ;
Sweet soul of tenderness and truth,
Soft nestled in my heart.

Thou say'st that heart is Poesy's harp,
A lute which Pleasure plays,
And Love's own dimpled fingers wake
To gay or mournful lays.

Then grieve not, should strains sad or harsh
Rise sometimes from its strings,
When thou dost jar the silver chords
With the fluttering of thy wings.

A L A Y.



THE glorious queen of heaven, who flings
Her royal radiance round me now,
As with clasped hands and upturned brow
I watch her pathway fair and free,
Is not so silvery with the light
She pours o'er darkened earth to-night
As in the gentle thoughts she brings
Of thee, dear love, of thee !

The night-wind trembling round the rose,
The starlight floating on the river,
The fearful aspen's silvery shiver,
The dew-drop glistening on the lea,
Night's pure baptism to the flowers, —
All, all bring back our dear, lost hours,
Till every heart-string thrills and glows
For thee, dear love, for thee !

And when dawn wakes the Earth with song,
And Nature's heart, so hushed to-night,
Goes leaping in the morning light, —
While waves flash onward to the sea, —
While perfumed dews to heaven arise, —
While glory flushes o'er the skies, —
Still through my soul shall sweet thoughts throng
Of thee, dear love, of thee !

Ah, thou beloved, whose heart hath thrilled
To blessed dreams and joys with mine,
What power shall change thy love divine,
Or shut its presence out from me, —
Since all bright things, from flower to star,
Its types and sweet reminders are
To this fond heart, this soul so filled
With thee, dear love, with thee !

We part not, though we said adieu.
Since first thy thoughts chimed in with mine,
And from those wondrous eyes of thine
A heaven of love looked down on me,
My very life round thine is poured, —
Thy words within my soul I hoard, —
Still true, in every heart-throb true,
To thee, dear love, to thee !

CONSTANCE.

THE tropic stars are looking down
 Upon the midnight deep ;
 The wind blows fresh, as on our course
 Right gallantly we sweep ;
 For thee I wake, O fair beloved !
 Far o'er the flashing foam,
 My fears, my hopes, my tender thoughts,
 Like swift-winged birds, fly home !
 Constance, my bride,
 My heart's dear pride,
 Say, is it well with thee ?

I wake from dreams that some dread ill
 Hath breathed upon thy bloom, —
 That round thy ways are falling fast
 The cold shades of the tomb ;

I wake to stretch my fond arms forth,
 In grief and sudden fear ;
 To weep, to call upon thy name,
 Yet know thou canst not hear !
 Constance, my bride,
 My heart's dear pride,
 Say, is it well with thee ?

I wake to traverse, step by step,
 The sweet paths of our past,
 Where the throb of bliss first woke our hearts,
 And the tide of life ran fast ;
 When I sunned me, through enchanted days,
 In thy beauty's splendid light ;
 When thy love was with me in my sleep,
 And hallowed all the night.
 Constance, my bride,
 My heart's dear pride,
 Say, is it well with thee ?

O, life is full, O, life is deep,
 O, earth is fair to see,
 A beautiful and blessed place,
 For it holdeth love and thee !

My faith in heaven and in thy truth
Are one for evermore ;
I read thy pure soul, and believe, —
I love thee and adore.
Constance, my bride,
My heart's dear pride,
Say, is it well with thee ?

The beauty of life's morning-time,
The day's full bloom and light,
Art thou to me ; and when, at last,
Comes on the long, chill night,
O, I will crown me with thy love,
And arm me with thy faith,
Breathe out thy name from my deep heart,
And thus go down to death !
Constance, my bride,
My heart's dear pride,
Say, is it well with thee ?

I know my soul's wild longings
Will seek thee in thy rest,
Where thou liest with a thought of me
Close folded to thy breast.

And I will fear no more, — thou dwell'st
 In the angels' gentle care,
 And the ear of Heaven low bendeth
 To the meek voice of thy prayer.
 Constance, my bride,
 My heart's dear pride,
I know 't is well with thee !

TO —, IN ABSENCE.



WHEN first we met, beloved, rememberest thou }
 How all my nature was athirst and faint ?
 My soul's high powers lay wasting still and slow,
 While my sad heart sighed forth its ceaseless plaint.

For frowning pride life's summer waves did lock
 Away from light, — their restless murmuring hushed ;
 But thou didst smite the cold, defying rock,
 And full and fast the living waters gushed !

O, what a summer glory life put on !
 What morning freshness those swift waters gave,
 That leaped from darkness forth into the sun,
 And mirrored heaven in every smallest wave !

* * * * *

The cloud that darkened long our sky of love,
And flung a shadow o'er life's Eden bloom,
Hath deepened into night, around, above, —
But night beneficent and void of gloom, —

The dews of peace and faith's sweet quiet bringing,
And memory's starlight, as joy's sunlight fades,
While, like the nightingale's melodious singing,
The voice of Hope steals out amid the shades.

Now it hath come and gone, the shadowed day,
The time of farewells that beheld us part,
I miss thy presence from my side away, —
Thy smile's sweet comfort raining on my heart.

Yes, we are parted. Now I call thy name,
And listen long, but no dear voice replies :
I miss thine earnest praise, thy gentle blame,
And the mute blessing of thy loving eyes.

Yet no, *not parted*. Still in life and power
Thy spirit cometh over wild and wave,
Is ever near me in the trial-hour,
A ready help, a presence strong and brave.

Thy love breathes o'er me in the winds of heaven,
Floats to me on the tides of morning light,
Descends upon me in the calms of even,
And fills with music all the dreamy night.

It falleth as a robe of pride around me,
A royal vesture rich with purple gleams, —
It is the glory wherewith life hath crowned me,
The large fulfilment of my soul's long dreams !

It is a pæan drowning notes of sadness,
It is a great light shutting out all gloom,
It is a fountain of perpetual gladness,
It is a garden of perpetual bloom.

But to *thy* nature pride and power belong,
And death-defying courage ; what to thee,
With thy great life, thy spirit high and strong,
May my one love in all its fulness be ?

An inward joy, sharp e'en to pain, yet dear
As thy soul's life, — a warmth, a light serene, —
A low, deep voice which none save thou may hear, —
A living presence, constant, though unseen.

Yet shalt thou fold it closer to thy breast,
In the dark days, when other loves depart,
And when thou liest down for the long rest,
Then, O beloved, 't will sleep upon thy heart!

THE GOLD-SEEKER.



'T WAS upon a Southern desert, and beneath a burning
sky,
That a pilgrim to the gold-clime sunk, o'erwearied,
down to die !
He was young, and fair, and slender, but he bore a
gallant heart, —
Through the march so long and toilsome he had bravely
held his part.
His companions round him gathered, with kind word
and pitying look,
As in fever-thirst he panted, like “the hart for the
water-brook” ;
While their last cool drops outpouring on his brow and
parched lips,
Sorrowed they to mark his glances growing dim with
death's eclipse.

Turning then, and onward passing, left they there the
dying man,
For a weary way to westward still the promised river
ran.

One there was, a comrade faithful, who the longest
lingered there,
While he wrung his hand in parting, bidding him not
yet despair ;
For they would return at morning, from the river-
banks, he said,
And, a silken scarf unfolding, laid it o'er the sufferer's
head,
Then, full often backward glancing, took the weary
march again,
Onward pressing toward the waters, gleaming far
across the plain.

Silent lies the one forsaken, in this hour of pain and
fear,
While their farewells and their footsteps die upon his
failing ear, —
With the withered turf his death-couch, 'neath the
burning heat of day,
All unhearing and unheeding, for his soul is far
away !

In the dear home of his childhood, in a pleasant North-
ern land,
He beholds about him smiling the familiar household
band ;
Sees, perchance, his father coming homeward through
the twilight gray,
Listens to his merry brothers, laughing in their childish
play,
Feels the fond arms of his mother, as of old, about
him thrown,
And the fair cheek of his sister pressing soft against
his own !
Or he strays amid the moonlight, in a cool and shad-
owy grove,
Looking down with earnest glances into eyes that look
back love !
All belovèd tones are calling sweetly through his heart
again,
And its dying pulse is quickened by the phantoms of
his brain !
And belovèd names he murmurs, while his bosom
heaves and swells,
For in dreams again he liveth through his partings and
farewells !

Slowly sinks the sun, — night's shadows round the
lonely pilgrim spread, —
While the rising night-winds gently lift the light scarf
from his head,
And the soft and pitying moonbeams glance upon his
forehead fair,
And the dews of night, descending, damp the dark locks
of his hair ;
Cool upon his brow they 're falling, but its fever-throbs
are o'er,
And his parchèd lips they moisten, but those lips shall
thirst no more !

His companions come at morning, come to look on
his dead face.
Come to lay him to his grave-rest, in that dreary, desert
place,
Where the tropic sun glares fiercely on the wild, un-
sheltered plain,
And where pour, from darkest heavens, rushing floods
of winter rain, —
Where shall come the wild-bird's screaming, and the
whirlwind's sounding sweep,
And the tramp of herded bisons shall go thundering
o'er his sleep.

There are piteous sounds of mourning in a far-off
Northern home,
Where o'er childhood's kindling dawn-light sudden
clouds of darkness come ;
There are heard a father's groanings, and a mother's
broken sighs, —
There a voiceless sorrow troubleth the clear deeps of
maiden eyes.

In their fearful dreams, at midnight, they behold him
left to die,
With the hard, hot ground beneath him, and above a
brazen sky, —
In his fainting, in his thirsting, in his pain and wild
despair,
Vainly calling on his dear ones, through the heavy
desert air !
O, the bitter self-reproaches mingled in the cup they
drain !
O, their poor hearts, pierced and tortured by a sharp
remorseful pain, —
That they sent their best and dearest from his home-
love's sheltering fold,
In the madness of adventure, on that pilgrimage of
gold !

THE POET OF TO-DAY.



WHAT siren joy from thy high trust hath won thee,
O Poet of to-day ? — thou still unheard,
Though struggling nations cast their eyes upon thee,
And the roused world is waiting for thy word !

Why lingerest thou amid the summer places,
The gardens of romance, the haunt of dreams,
'Mid verdurous shadows, lit by fairy faces,
And fitful playing of soft, golden gleams ?

There have thy fiery thoughts and hopes betaken
To still delights, and loveliness, and rest,
Thy life to quiet gliding, lest it waken
The languid lilies sleeping on its breast.

The rudest wind which comes where thou art lying,
Listening the chiming waters as they flow,
May scarcely set the mournful pines a-sighing,
Or shake down rose-leaves on thy dreaming brow.

Arouse ! look up, to where above thee tower
Regions of being grander, freer, higher,
Where God reveals his presence and his power,
E'en as of old, in thunders and in fire.

Then stray no longer in the valleys vernal ;
Ascend where darkness and great lights belong,
Sunshine and tempest ; scale the heights eternal,
Go forth and tread the mountain-paths of song !

From those far summits shall thy thought's clear voi-
cing
Fall like the sweep of torrents on the world ;
Thy lays speed forth, exultant and rejoicing,
Their eagle pinions on the winds unfurled.

Ah, when the soul of ancient song was blending
With the rapt bard's in his immortal strains,
'T was like the wine drunk on Olympus, sending
Divine intoxication through the veins.

It brought strange, charmèd words, and magic singing,
And forms of beauty burning on the sight, —
Young loves their flight through airs ambrosial winging,
And dark-browed heroes arming for the fight, —

The trumpet's "golden cry," the shield's quick flashing,
The dance of banners and the rush of war, —
Death-showers of arrows and the spear's sharp clash-
ing, —
The homeward rolling of the victor's car !

But ah ! in all that song's heroic story,
Had sad Humanity one briefest part ?
Sounds through the clang of words, the storm, the glory,
One sharp, strong cry from out her bleeding heart ?

But unto thee the soul of song is given,
O Poet of to-day, a grander dower, —
Comes from a higher than the Olympian heaven,
In holier beauty and in larger power.

To thee Humanity, her woes revealing,
Would all her griefs and ancient wrongs rehearse ;
Would make thy song the voice of her appealing,
And sob her mighty sorrows through thy verse.

While in her season of great darkness sharing,
Hail thou the coming of each promise-star
Which climbs the midnight of her long despairing,
And watch for morning o'er the hills afar.

Wherever Truth her holy warfare wages,
Or Freedom pines, there let thy voice be heard ;
Sound like a prophet-warning down the ages
The human utterance of God's living word.

But bring not thou the battle's stormy chorus,
The tramp of armies, and the roar of fight,
Not war's hot smoke to taint the sweet morn o'er us,
Nor blaze of pillage, reddening up the night.

O, let thy lays prolong that angel-singing,
Girdling with music the Redeemer's star,
And breathe God's peace, to earth "glad tidings"
bringing
From the near heavens, of old so dim and far !

ARNOLD DE WINKELRIED.



DAY immortal in Helvetia, — day to every Switzer
dear, —

Day that saw Duke Leopold down before Sempach
appear,

Just as morning fresh and stilly dawned above the
ancient town,

And the mountain mists uprolling let the waiting sun-
light down.

Full four thousand knights and barons marched with
Leopold that day,

With their vassals, squires, and burghers, following in
grand array ;

'T was the Duke himself came foremost, slowly came,
in state and pride,

With the knight of Ems, brave Eyloff, gravely riding
at his side.

Fiery-eyed with ancient hatred rode proud Gessler, as
became

One of the abhorrèd lineage, and the old accursèd
name.

It was while their serfs and hirelings cut the Switzer's
tall grain down,

That the Austrian knights paraded on their steeds before
the town.

"Ho! our reapers would have breakfast!" thus the
Sire de Reinach calls.

"The Confederates make it ready!" cried the Avoyer
from the walls.

Now, upon a hill to northward, in among the sheltering
wood,

The Confederates' little army still and firm and fearless
stood ;

They from Gersau, Zug, and Glaris, the Waldstetten,
and Lucerne,

But not a burgher-or a knight from false and recreant
Berne.

There with looks of old defiance glared they down
upon the foe,
And their hearts were hot for vengeance when they
thought of long-ago ;
For full many a pike now gleaming in the pleasant
summer light.
Had their fathers dipped in Austrian blood at Morgarten's
mountain fight !

Up amid the winds and sunshine Austria's blazoned
banners danced, —
With a mighty clash of armour Austria's laughty hosts
advanced ;
Calling on the God of freedom, with a shout for Swit-
zerland,
Down against the mailèd thousands rushed the little
patriot band !
With their short swords, and their halberds, and their
simple shields of wood, —
With their archers, and their slingers, and their pike-
men stern and rude.

But as thick as stands at harvest golden grain along
the Rhine,
Stood the spears of the invaders, gleaming down the
threatening line ;

And as pressed the hardy Switzers close upon their
leader's track,
Everywhere that wall of lances met their way, and
hurled them back ;
Till the blood of brave Confederates stained the hill-side
and the plain,
Drenching all the trampled greensward like a storm of
mountain rain ;
Till the boldest brow was darkened, and the firmest
lip was paled ;
Till the peasant's heart grew fearful, and the shepherd's
stout arm failed.
Then from out the Swiss ranks stepping, high above
the tumult called,
He, the Knight de Winkelried, Arnold, pride of Under-
wald :
“ Yield not, dear and faithful allies ! — stay, for *I* your
way will make !
Care you for the wife and children, for your old companion's
sake ;
Follow now, and strike for freedom, God, and Switzerland ! ”
he cried ;
Full against the close ranks rushing, with his arms extended
wide,

Caught, and to his bosom gathered, the sharp lances of
the foe !

Then, as roll the avalanches down from wilds of Alpine
snow,

Through the breach, on rolled the Switzers, overthrew
the mail-clad ranks,

Smote, as smote their shepherd fathers, on Algeri's
marshy banks !

Everywhere the Austrian nobles, serfs, and hirelings
turned in flight, —

Soon was seen the royal standard wavering, falling in
the fight ;

'T was the Duke himself upraised it, and its bloody
folds outspread,

Waved it, till his guard of barons all went down among
the dead ;

Then, amid the battle plunging, bravely bore the war-
rior's part,

Till the long pike of a Switzer cleft in twain his tyrant
heart !

With their souls athirst for vengeance, through dark
gorge and rocky glen,

On the footsteps of the flying, hot pursued the moun-
tain men, —

Smiting down the bold invaders, till the ground for
many a rood,

Round about that town beleaguered, was afloat with
Austrian blood.

Then arose their shouts of triumph up amid the shad-
owy even, —

Loud rejoicings, fierce exultings, storming at the gates
of heaven, —

Till a thousand mountain echoes rendered back the
mighty cries,

With the sound of earth's contention making tumult
in the skies.

But amid the rush of battle, or the victor's proud ar-
ray,

Came the saviour of Helvetia ? came the hero of the
day ?

Prone along the wet turf lay he, with the lances he had
grasped,

All his valor's deadly trophies still against his brave
heart clasped !

Feeling not the tempest-surgings, hearing not the roar
of strife, —

With the red rents in his bosom, and his young eye
closed on life.

And when thus his comrades found him, there was
triumph in their tears, —
He had gathered glory's harvest in that bloody sheaf of
spears.

Lo, it is an ancient story, and, as through the shades of
night,
We are gazing through dim ages, on that fierce, un-
equal fight ; —
But the darkness is illumined by one grand, heroic deed,
And we hear the shout of Arnold, and we see his great
heart bleed !

Yet to-day, O hero-martyr, does the Switzer guard thy
name,
And to-day thy glorious legend touches all his heart
with flame ;
And with reverence meek and careful still he hands
thy memory down,
By the chapel in the mountains, and the statue in the
town.

Take thou courage, struggling spirit ! Thus, upon life's
battle-plain,
God for all his heroes careth, and they cannot fall in
vain !

And of heaven for ever blessèd shall the soul heroic be
Who, oppression's close ranks breaking, makes a path-
way for the free ;
Though his faithful breast receiveth the sharp lances of
the foe,
God, the God of freedom, counteth all the life-drops as
they flow !
He shall have the tears of millions, and the homage of
the brave, —
He shall have immortal crownings, and the world shall
keep his grave.

L'ENVOI.



I KNOW these lays will come to thee
Like flowers along thy pathway strown,
And wear, to thy young, generous eyes,
A grace and beauty not their own.

Thou know'st they spring where deepest shade
And blinding sunlight are at strife, —
Faint blooms and frail, — yet bearing thee
Sweet breathings from my inmost life.

Or come like waters, leaping out
From shadowy places to the day,
To catch heaven's brightness on their waves,
And freshen earth along their way.

A streamlet laughing in the sun
Is all a busy world may hear, —
The deepest fountains of my soul
Send up their murmurs to thine ear.

There are to whom these lays shall come,
Like strains that skylarks downward send ;
But, ah, no higher than thy heart
They sing to thee, belovèd friend !

For in thy manhood pure and strong,
With thy great soul, thy fresh young heart,
Thou *livest* my ideal life,
And what I only dream, thou *art*.

The Grecian youth whose name thou bear'st, —
Who nightly with the billows strove,
And through the wild seas cleaved his way
To the dear bosom of his love, —

Ne'er bore a braver soul than thine,
When yawned great deeps, and storm-clouds frowned,
Nor lifted up, amid the waves,
A brow with loftier beauty crowned.

The poet's rare and wondrous gifts
In thee await their triumph-hour, —
There sleep within thy dreamy eyes
The mighty secrets of his power.

Thy heart with one high throb can rise
His fair, heroic dreams above, —
There breathes more passion in thy voice
Than in a thousand lays of love.

Ah, know'st thou not the while thou deem'st
The poet's mission most divine,
Life's grand, unwritten poetry
Goes out from natures such as thine ?

What though it falleth brokenly
And faintly on the world's dull ear, —
Though clamorous voices cry it down,
To God it rises, pure and clear !

It cometh as a service glad, —
A music all as full and sweet
As though the stars hymned forth their joy,
And rolled their anthems to His feet.

When, like the Grecian youth, thou seest
The midnight tempests gather round, —
When storm-clouds seem to flood the heavens,
And all the starry lights are drowned, —

Upborne by angel-hands, mayst thou
Through life's wild sea right onward sweep,
To where Hope's signal lights the night,
And Love stands watching by the deep !

THE END.

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